

ACTIONS AND IDEAS

C. SONG JACKSON

What is left over if I subtract the fact that my arm goes up from the fact that I raise my arm?

—Wittgenstein

I lift my arm and let it fall. My action seems to me free; but asking myself whether I could raise my arm in every direction, I see that I raised it in the direction in which there was least obstruction to that action either from things around me or from the construction of my own body. I chose one out of all the possible directions because in it there were fewest obstacles. For my action to be free it was necessary that it should encounter no obstacles. To conceive of a man being free we must imagine him outside space, which is evidently impossible.

—Tolstoy

If, then, a man moved by anger or hatred is led to clench his fist or to move his arm, this result takes place...because one and the same action can be associated with various mental images of things.

—Spinoza

#223039238458302

Kyin Choi

Five feet seven inches

One hundred thirty-five pounds

Twenty-Seven

Korean-American

Sunday, March 8th

Light showers, 56°

8:45 AM

Coming down Connecticut, wide then narrow sidewalks across Florida on into Dupont. Kyin passing hotels and tourists, a man sitting on a crate shaking change—"Bless you, you look beautiful today!"—reaching into her pocket then stuffing a bill into the cup. The streets yet quiet, her phone vibrates; she answers and continues walking talking, entering *The Grounds*. In line behind a man ordering—standing waiting. Then moving to the front. "Triple flat white and a paper," she says—paying. Then walking to the side, grabbing a newspaper folded. A few people sitting chatting in chairs. Looks out onto R Street— hears her order called, turning and grabbing the cup. "Thanks," she says.

Cell, 8:49 AM

Kyin: Hi, mom.

Chin Hae Choi : Hello?

Kyin: Hi, mom. What's going on?

CHC: Oh, Kyin? Difficult to hear you. Ok, so what are you doing today?

Kyin: I dunno, why?

CHC: I was just calling checking in. To see how you are doing.

Kyin: I'm fine, Mom.

CHC: Ok, you need to eat something healthy. Make sure you eat a good lunch today.

Kyin: Holdon. Ok, I gotta go, ok?

CHC: Come by this week, ok? I may need help writing a letter, ok?

Kyin: Bye.

Sitting at a little round table, flipping open the paper; begins reading an article.

District Briefing

Triple Homicide in Northeast

The calm before the storm broke in the early morning when the air erupted with the sound of gunfire. A hail of bullets, a passing car, and three men left dead. No witnesses.

DC Police received the call around 4 AM, arriving near the 2100 block of Maryland Avenue NE to find three victims lying on the sidewalk, each filled with bullets, each pronounced dead on the scene.

No names have been released.

—*Alice Kenner*

More
customers
enter, the
sounds of pop-
jazz filling the
air—Joni
Mitchell, Beck,
Hiromi.
The man across
from Kyin

typing on his laptop.

Flipping through several sections of the paper, reading a few articles, op-eds, a movie review.

More people coming sitting, crowding the small space.

Standing, she exits.

10:37 AM

Still quiet on a soggy Sunday.

Stepping toward the circle, past stores and cars—sitting on the painted black bench.

Continues reading the paper.

The water falling hitting against the newspaper, the black slats, a man sleeping on the end rolling over and grunting.

Kyin lays the paper aside and leans back, sticking out her legs. Watching: a man walking a dog, a woman pushing a baby carriage.

A group of joggers wearing rainjackets—talking splashing through the circle.

Looking left: a couple with umbrellas each—the man yellow, the woman blue.

Wind pushing the rain wet against her cheek.

The circle silent. Pulling a camera from her bag—taking a photograph.



Cars honking winding through the circle.

A yelling man.

1:53 PM

Coming up New Hampshire, turning left on 18th Street.

The street yet quiet.

A brief downpour—then again the rain slowing, light.

Sloshing past streets S then T, Florida. Cars spraying puddles onto the sidewalk.

A couple standing at the intersection, looking at the numbers counting down.

Narrow sidewalks uneven—passing a woman shaking wide hips, a group of people with hoods and umbrellas standing waiting for the bus.

Climbing the hill.

The wind pushing her forward into the rain seeping into her jeans.

2:35 PM

Into a building, the elevator, her apartment.

Through the door, hanging up her bag, her jacket; stepping out of boots,
peeling off socks, pants.
To the refrigerator for water cold.
To the couch. The room dark—lines of light through the blinds’ interstices.
Cool water down the throat.
Sit—dozes.
3:50 PM
Wakes—megaphone voices yelling protesting outside the Chinese Embassy.
Stretches and gets water, walking to her computer—sends a message.
Leaning back, checking her mail and clicking open chat.

<p>ThunkChat, logged in as <i>Becomingbeing</i> 3:59 PM Vatbrain83: which is irrelevant! Becomingbeing: what’s that? Vatbrain83: hey, bb! Where you been? Becomingbeing: outside in the world Vatbrain83: why? Becomingbeing: ha Swampman: nice day out there? Becomingbeing: beautiful Swampman: tell us of reality, bb Becomingbeing: look out your window. Swampman: is that step one? or is that all of the steps? Becomingbeing: you two the only ones in here? Vatbrain83: the only two I can see Becomingbeing: to be sure—lurkers. That’s all the steps, swampy. Reality, just like I pictured it! Skyscrapers and everything.</p>	<p>Instant Message, 3:59 PM Kyin: where you at? Fiela: home. Kyin: doing what? Fiela: working Kyin: on a Sunday? Fiela: I know. I suck. Kyin: Let’s hang out tomorrow night. Fiela: alright—when, where, who else? Kyin: just think it over, email from work tomorrow. Fiela: yes, good idea. Will do. Kyin: that bad, huh?</p>	<p>Email Inbox, 3:59 PM From: Ian Sis—what are you doing next weekend? Need to talk. Email or call. Love, Brother Een</p>
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Standing walking to the kitchen—making coffee, rubbing her head.

Walking past the window: darker outside, a few people following dogs.

A man is standing on the sidewalk, smoking looking up toward her window.

The sound of coffee gurgling—she paces, stretches, walks back into the kitchen and grabs a mug with a moose on the front.

Takes coffee cupped to her desk.

The liquid warm against her throat.

ThunkChat, 4:27 PM

Swampman: you live near skyscrapers, huh?

Becomingbeing: not exactly.

Vatbrain83: hey, someone was in here earlier looking for you

Swampman: yeah, some ass

Becomingbeing: ok, you're pulling my leg—oh, you mean Orwell? Or was it Bentham—watching my every move?

Swampman: seriously. Aether.

Becomingbeing: Aether—that's her name?

Vatbrain83: him, her—who knows? We got into a discussion about free will, then all of a sudden it's asking where you are.

Swampman: it asked at least five times. We explained to it that we do not have a locating device attached to your ankle.

Vatbrain83: yes, then we explained to him/her how chatrooms work, and that the internet is a magical place.

Becomingbeing: lol

Swampman: it was very pissed and left in a huff.

Messaging, 4:27 PM

Fiela: my boss messed up this whole account because he thought he knew what he was doing. If he would've just let me handle it, I wouldn't have all this crap. Fucking ass.

Fiela: hello?

Kyin: Sorry, I was listening—checking email, chatting.

Fiela: ?

Kyin: my brother.

Fiela: ahhh.

Kyin: yeah.

Fiela: [awkward silence]

Kyin: lol

Fiela: so now what?

Kyin: who knows? Bleh. Too tired to deal with it.

Let's talk later ok? Tell me more about work.

Fiela: will do. peace.

Kyin: peace.

Quickly to the window, pushing it open—the snap of crisp late-afternoon air.
Then back to the computer.
Clicking open her blog.

ThunkChat, 5:00 PM

Becomingbeing: hmmm

Vatbrain83: yes, makes you think, doesn't it?

Swampman: does it not?

Becomingbeing: begin paranoia fantasy stage 1!

Vatbrain83: ha

Swampman: what's stage two?

Becomingbeing: stage 2 is when I start seeing my mail tampered with.

Vatbrain83: no, stage 2 is when you see a man standing outside your window and you begin to see that man as mysterious. Why's he standing there anyway?

Becomingbeing: oh-em-gee there's a dude out there right now!

Vatbrain83: really?

Becomingbeing: hold on, let me see if he's still there.

Becomingbeing: nope. Gone. I think he's one of my neighbors.

Swampman: seen him before?

Becomingbeing: seems familiar

Vatbrain83: familiar how? Like déjà vu?

Swampman: "the young woman trusts men on the internet and is seduced by a charming man, only to learn..."

Vatbrain83: cue ominous music

Becomingbeing: wasn't that a flick?

Vatbrain83: or a book—or both, probably.

Blog, 5:00 PM

Getting a headache. Looking over the past month—I had 20 headaches last month, and already 4 this month.

One good thing, though—ten years ago I had around 2 migraines a month. Now I only get about one a year.

Beautiful outside today—I love Dupont, hope they turn the fountain on soon.

Was thinking about my Mom. She called this morning, asked me to write a letter for her.

Of course, I snapped at her again, and again I feel bad about it. We need to get past all this crap. Bleh.

Also: why do they turn up the heat so high in this damn building? What the hell am I gonna have for dinner tonight? I need to lose weight.

Sags down into the chair while writing—then quick stands and unplugs the laptop, carrying it and her coffee over to the couch. Props a pillow behind her back.

The newspaper is on the ground next to her, open to the local section. While typing, she grabs her socks with her other foot's toes, peeling them onto the floor.

Then grabs the remote and clicks on news—mutes it with captions.

Pops up quick to the kitchen, refilling the coffee and grabbing a few Excedrin—tossed down the throat with a gulp of water from the refrigerator.

Then back to the couch, looking out the window, the man now gone.

ThunkChat, 5:42 PM

Swampman: the book based on the film based on the book.

Becomingbeing: next topic

Swampman: it is interesting, though. We feel something is outside of our control, which in turn leads to feelings of paranoia.

Vatbrain83: what's outside of our control?

Swampman: pick your poison. Code. Infrastructure. The stock market. Relationships. Life.

Becomingbeing: so anything that is a "black box" will become for some people a paranoia machine. A computer, another person's mind, the world, etc.

Vatbrain83: are you saying that people that write code are less inclined to be paranoid about the internet?

Swampman: it stands to reason.

Becomingbeing: or at least they are not *as* paranoid. A chef won't be paranoid about the food from his own restaurant being spat in.

Vatbrain83: but he could be if he went to another restaurant.

Swampman: I'm saying that it wouldn't be considered paranoia if the restaurant he went to was similar to his own restaurant.

Becomingbeing: so now we're defining the term "paranoid" as against the term—what—"justified caution"?

Vatbrain83: Fine. The question becomes who has "justified caution" when it comes to X and who has "paranoia"?

Becomingbeing: examples

Swampman: "justified caution" for the chef is when he is at his own restaurant or restaurants similar to his own. Say he runs a solid 3-star restaurant. When he is at a chain restaurant, his feelings about his food being spat in become paranoia.

Vatbrain83: can I just say, um—gross?

Sounds of the sidewalk.

Sitting, she unclicks the mute button, turning the volume low.

Closes her eyes against her right pressing palm.

News, 6:02 PM

Male Anchor: A man went on a shooting rampage in Alabama, killing 11.

Then again mutes the screen.

Her neighbor entering across the hall—keys in the lock, jangling, the door slamming.

A voice outside the window. The constant hum of cars, her laptop, the ceiling fan.

ThunkChat, 6:28 PM

Becomingbeing: yeah, ick. paranoia or classism. Ok, so there is no restaurant owner that can have “justified caution” for every restaurant she visits?

Swampman: It would have to be someone who has spent a lifetime working at both fast food chains and “fine dining,” working her way up and down the ladder.

Vatbrain83: which maybe isn’t so rare. Maybe it’s common for chefs to go through that kind of apprenticeship.

Swampman: maybe

Becomingbeing: so, ok, let’s extrapolate this example. What is “justified caution” regarding the internet versus “paranoia”?

Swampman: well, there again, I think we have to break the “internet,” or the idea of the internet, down into little subsections.

Vatbrain83: subsections?

Swampman: zones.

Becomingbeing: so, you’re saying that there is no one person who can have “justified caution” in regards to the whole internet. They can only reasonably have “justified caution” for a limited area, or “zone.”

Swampman: exactly. Which does not mean that everyone who uses the internet is paranoid. It means, rather, that most people who use the internet fall into one of three categories: (1) paranoid, (2) couldn’t care less/ don’t want to know, or (3) “justified caution”— which applies only in limited circumstances.

Becomingbeing: hmmm. Something seems off in that summation.

Vatbrain83: for one thing, what are the “limited circumstances”?

Becomingbeing: yeah. Seems like a catchall phrase.

Swampman: I think, really, it’s like the restaurant owner. Someone who has developed a certain part of the internet will exert “justified caution” to that part of the internet and parts like it. But, with the internet, it’s impossible for someone to know it all.

Becomingbeing: so if we imagine some proto-user, maybe someone who helped develop internet protocol, they might have at least a baseline level of “justified caution” for every part of the internet.

Vatbrain83: they would have a baseline level for the underworkings, but not the actual content of, for example, a randomly selected webpage.

Swampman: well, that’s what we’re talking about, right? The architecture. Because content has little if nothing to do with it. the same content on the internet is also in books or newspapers or movies. The same plot can be in a movie in a book on the internet.

Vatbrain83: fair enough.

ThunkChat 6:42 PM

Becomingbeing: so our proto-user would be the person with the highest level of “justified caution”—and even they would only have a bare-bones outline.

Swampman: right

Vatbrain83: what interests me, now, is that your category (2) person above doesn’t seem like a viable option for a reasonable person.

Swampman: I don’t follow.

Becomingbeing: I got you, VB. you’re saying everyone should exercise “justified caution,” right? Except that it’s impossible— everyone *can’t* always exercise “justified caution.” Not even our proto-user.

Vatbrain83: exactly. I’m saying that a certain level of paranoia is not only logical but also healthy. Otherwise one ends up being a dupe.

Becomingbeing: but there is no way of knowing what “level of paranoia” is either too much or not enough. Even for our proto-user.

Swampman: proto-user= God if we map the analogy onto life.

Vatbrain83: not quite, but I see what you’re saying.

Becomingbeing: I agree. Let’s say God is an entity that has created everything. The proto-users of the Internet only have “justified caution” because there exist parts of the internet that are outside of their scope. That is not so with God. God does not need to exert “justified caution” because God created everything. It is impossible for God to be paranoid.

Vatbrain83: There is a “proto-user” for every aspect in life. I think we can call our “proto-user” the real-world equivalent of God. Which is to say that every individual, logically speaking, should attempt to maintain a balance between paranoia and “justified caution.”

Swampman: which balance one can never achieve. One will always either be too much or not enough paranoid.

Becomingbeing: that’s certainly true of everyone I know. either always freaking out or couldn’t give a damn. But at least we can try to master our own limited “zones,” right?

The computer begins heating up on her lap.

Closing the screen.

Soft—she carries the laptop to her desk.

Clicks on—unmutes—the local news.

News, 7:08 PM

Male Anchor: A beautiful spring day out there today—you gonna keep it around for us, Sally?

Weatherwoman: Sorry, Jack. Looks like a little colder air coming in. Probably gonna be a little chilly all week—about normal for this time of year. Coming up, your 5-day forecast.

Again rubs her head.

Clicks off the television.

Sitting on the couch becomes sleeping on the couch.

Monday, March 9th

4:53 AM

Cloudy, windy, 54°

Construction sounds in the street. Lifting her head off the throw pillow.

“What?” she says.

Head back against the cushion—hand against her forehead, curled over her eyes.

The sounds continue.

5:13 AM

“Aishhh,” she says, then stands.

Drags legs to the window, looks out.

A squirrel winding up the trunk of a tree. A pause in the jackhammer—a dove coos.

Away from the window, into the bathroom, avoiding contact with her mirrored eyes.

Then out and into the kitchen—on the way, pushing on her computer.

Clicks on the front burner. From the fridge—an energy drink, an egg. Bread in the toaster. Click—carbonated fizz down her throat.

Cracked egg into the pan.

Into the living room, clicking on the local news.

News, 5:27 AM

Female Anchor: How are the roads out there, Tina?

Traffic Reporter: Not looking too good out there today, Ron. Starting with I-270 heading South just past Montgomery Village Ave we've got a major delay—stop-and-go all the way back to the Urbana exit. Then over to 66—pretty nasty, we've got an overturned truck, police trying to move it off to the side of the road.

Then back into the kitchen.

Butter then egg on toast on a plate—carried to the couch.

Eating, she watches the screen.

The sound of the metal knife against porcelain.

5:58 AM

Puts the plate and metal into the dishwasher. Then over to her computer, grabbing it and sitting on the couch, switching the channel to cable news—clicks the mute then closed-caption buttons.

Clicks open her email.

From: Matwa Associates

Ms. Choi,

This is a reminder that you have an eye appointment with us this afternoon at 2:35 PM.

We look forward to seeing you!

Stacy

Reads, then sends an email.

Email Outbox, 6:14 AM

To: Ian

Sure, next weekend's fine.

When and where?

Kyin

Email Inbox, 6:09 AM

From: Mom

Kyin,

Attached is the letter I asked you to look at. Thank you. If you want lunch Thursday I can meet.

Wear a sweater today.

Love,

Mom

The sound of her neighbor slamming a door—Kyin steps quick to the window.

Looking and seeing a woman wearing a long beige coat with brown heels, short blond hair bending into the crepuscular light. The woman is holding a brown bag—walking to a can and throwing in the bag.

Then walking to a brown car and driving off.

Kyin returns to the couch and sips her energy drink while staring at the wall.

She leans back into the cushions, crossing her legs, looking into her lap.

Lifting her head, her eyes pan across the screen.

Then, grabbing her computer and bringing it onto her lap, she clicks open her blog.

Blog, 6:25 AM

It's crazy early and they're out jackhammering.

Woke me up.

My neighbor just rushed out the door, and for some reason I looked out the window to watch her—and she threw something in the trash—a brown bag.

Why wouldn't she just throw it in her own trash—or even down the building chute?

Pausing in her writing, she again leans into the cushions.

Then quick stands and pulls off her pants, walking to the closet and grabbing jeans, throwing on a sweater and coat, slipping into shoes. Grabbing her keys, runs into the hall into the elevator—then quick out the door, down the sidewalk to the trashcan, grabbing the brown bag and slipping it under her coat.

Looks up and down the street—sees no one. Crosses back to the building.

Then, as she opens the door, a man comes out, walking a dog.

“Oh—hi,” she says.

The man nodding.

Through the door, she turns and looks at him through the glass; he standing with his eyes closed, holding onto the leash as the dog urinates against a tree.

Back up and into her room.

On the couch, she pulls the bag from her coat and places it on the coffee table.

A square brown rectangle.

Inside is an envelope; inside the envelope is a folder—she opens the folder, pulling out several sheets of paper. Looks over them each; each covered in letters and numbers. Spreads the sheets out on the coffee table, bending over them—then leaning back into the cushions.

“Ok,” she says.

Then stands, walking to the bathroom and washing her hands.

Returning to the couch—back to her laptop, her blog.

Sitting typing.

On the television is a commercial for a mini-camera-phone: a woman jumps over a puddle, then darts around a corner—bending her head around the quoin and snapping a picture—then sliding the camera-phone into her pocket and winking at the screen.

Blog, 6:38 AM

I just did something stupid.

For some reason, I went out and grabbed that brown bag from the trash. I was nervous as hell, looking around, and this guy came out to walk his dog, but I don't think he even noticed me, really.

Just something about the way she was acting. Mysterious.

So, now, sitting here on my coffee table, I have my neighbor's trash.

I don't even know what this stuff is. Pages of gibberish.

Here's a quote from the top page:

“X7Beyond cos(2x), the f5 erylē”

What?

Then some odd drawings. Is this woman maybe a schizophrenic?

Great, ok— I just stole the trash of Voynich/Schreber. Nice.

Standing Kyin stretches, walking to the bathroom and showering—rattlings siphon through the shower head, warning the fountain—a steady stream of cleansing. Iridescent spheres whiting upon thinned brows. The foam weighs and slides down her smooth leg, funneling down and into the slotted center of the floor. The sounds of the waking street coming through the window.

Towels off and dresses—jeans and a black shirt, a navy cardigan.

7:27 AM

Against the panes, rain.

Kyin packs her laptop and camera— throws on a jacket. Down and out into the wet. The long bottoms of her jeans hitting against puddles, water sliding down her back and arms.

Crossing Taft Bridge—cabs and cars loud, hissing across the wet concrete. She moves against the rail—a woman passing jogging wearing black lycra.

Below, cars packed tightly on the Rock Creek Parkway.

The seeping smell of wet weather.

Across and into a coffee shop, finding a place to sit. Connecting up her laptop and ordering a triple flat white.

Clicks open her windows.

ThunkChat, 8:27 AM

Becomingbeing: what's the topic in here?

Zombie: perception, generally

Becomingbeing: what about it?

2cyborg: anything about perception, really. We're just thinking off our heads.

Vatbrain83: we haven't really come up with a subject yet.

Becomingbeing: ok—I have an eye exam later today. Ideas?

2cyborg: do you wear glasses?

Becomingbeing: no.

Vatbrain83: do you need glasses?

Becomingbeing: I don't know. I don't think so.

Zombie: so, right now, you think that you can see clearly. But you may go into the eye doctor's and they will tell you that you don't see clearly.

Vatbrain83: in which case, they will give you either glasses or contacts or eye surgery.

Zombie: you will have found out that all this time that you thought you were seeing clearly, in fact you were not. Your visual perception of the world has been flawed, imperfect.

2cyborg: I'd rather call it a misrepresentation. your apprehension of reality has been distorted.

Becomingbeing: you're both suggesting that there exists some possible "pure" way of inhabiting the world. that any existence that does not meet up with that "purity" is—what, not real? So what—are you saying that a disabled person doesn't truly live? That we all live on some spectrum of "truly living"?

Vatbrain83: that doesn't sound right.

Blog, 8:27 AM

People jog even in the rain. I see a cop car outside, the cop sitting inside, just looking out into the rain. He looks bored. What's he doing sitting there?

The rain coming down heavy. The drink bitter.

The downpour distracting—she looks up from the screen. A group of pedestrians running crossing Calvert, hands holding umbrellas and newspapers, briefcases against wet jackets.

A few taking cover under the coffee shop's awning.

ThunkChat, 9:35 AM

Becomingbeing: because I think that's what that argument says—wow—it's like you're both stuck in some world of transcendental observation—don't you believe in bodies? In flesh?

2cyborg: hey, I believe in flesh—rather, I believe that metal is just as much a part of us as anything else. That humans are necessarily technological. That those glasses are as much a part of you as the food or caffeine you eat for breakfast. The technology compensates for the imperfection, but technology is you; it is incorporated.

Becomingbeing: I feel as if you're pointing toward some teleological world, where we are all “flawed” if we can't reach some Platonic ideal!

Vatbrain83: this is the most excited I've ever seen you, bb.

Zombie: yeah, you must really hate idealism.

Vatbrain83: if you want to get right to the heart of the matter, I believe that we only see what our culture has taught us to be able to perceive

Becomingbeing: what?!?!?

Vatbrain83: is that how you argue now? by making exclamations?

Zombie: you mean, as in, “everything is socially constructed”?

Becomingbeing: come on—that is sophomore humanities student bullshit. Wow, come on vb! Really?

Vatbrain83: I'm still waiting for an argument.

2cyborg: are you on your period, becomingbeing?

Becomingbeing: holy crap! Did you really just say that? hahaha!

Zombie: wow, cyborg. That was really out of line. This isn't that kind of forum.

Vatbrain83: cyborg, if you're gonna talk like that, please go. I disagree with bb, but she deserves respect, ok?

A man in a brown coat reaches into his pocket, pulling out a handkerchief to wipe the water from his face. He says something to the woman standing next to him and the woman smiles—then begins gesturing, pointing.

The waiter again comes, Kyin ordering an egg-and-cheese bagel—coffee black.

Looking outside, seeing the policeman yet sitting in his cruiser, rain sliding down the windshield—a cataract.

A child is running across Duke Ellington Bridge. Kyin watching as he bounds through the rain—quick splashes of puddles.

The waiter bringing a coffee and bagel.

ThunkChat, 9:59 AM

Becomingbeing: thanks for the gallantry—oh, you’ve saved little ol’ me! For I cannot protect myself!

2cyborg: ah, I was just kidding. But you’re right, it was an asshole joke. I apologize, becomingbeing.

Becomingbeing: no one ever needs to apologize to me. Everything is just life experience. So now I know a little more about what kind of person you are, that’s all.

2cyborg: well, I apologized, ok?

Becomingbeing: and I’m saying, no need. I’m the kind of person, if someone betrays my trust I don’t cry about it, I just never forget it.

Vatbrain83: well, ok. can we get back to the argument?

Zombie: yes. Can we only perceive what we’ve been taught to perceive?

2cyborg: I’m pretty much with vatbrain, just waiting for becomingbeing to convince us otherwise.

Zombie: so, nothing is biological.

Vatbrain83: of course it’s all biological. But that biology is funneled into a chamber.

Kyin sits back,
leaning away from
the computer, the
table.

The boy continues
across the bridge—
continues running
when he reaches the
light, red, a car
braking skidding
through the rain—
and a car behind hits
the car in front, the

boy running around the front of the first car—the cars each sliding sideways—stopped in the rain.

The police officer jumping from his vehicle and yelling at the boy, “Hey!” he yells.

Standing Kyin watching through the window.

The policeman chasing the boy.

“Police!” he yells.

The boy running—suddenly stops. The rain dripping from the brim of his ballcap as he turns to face the officer.

The officer standing pointing a gun.

“Get down!” he yells.

“Now!” he yells—“On the ground!”

Then—without lowering his gun—says something into his jacket.

The boy standing still, hands at his sides.

“Get down!”

Behind the officer, at the intersection, the first driver gets out of her car and begins looking at her bumper.

“Oh, hell,” she says.

The officer snapping his head back to her. “Get back in your car!” he yells.

“Excuse me?” she says. “Why are you—”

“Get back in your car! Now!”

He turns fully to her—then, as he is turning back to the boy, the boy reaches into the pouch of his hoodie and quickly the officer turns full and fires.

Yelling, “Fuck!”

And running up to the boy.

Then reaching into the boy’s pouch, pulling out the small hands holding a brown bag.

“Fuckshit!” the officer yells.

Then again yells something into his jacket.

Blood from the boy trickling down the street, mixing with the rain.

In the distance, across the bridges, sirens can be heard approaching.

The officer is saying something to the boy, but the boy is dead.

Then the officer begins talking to himself—“Fuckfuckfuck,” he says.

Then a police car comes—one, then another, then an ambulance.

The officer standing.

Other officers come and stand next to the dead boy and the officer, the rain sliding down their jackets and hats.

Kyin watching the rain bouncing against the boy’s face—someone yells and they cover him.

Then the EMTs come and load the body into the ambulance, the siren wailing then fading as it heads toward Washington Hospital Center.

They set up flares and roadblocks. A news crew comes—and a woman stands in front of the cordoned-off triangle and talks with a microphone in front of a camera. Finished, she turns to the cameraman and says, “We’re gonna be here a while.”

Sitting Kyin.

The waiter coming shaking his head.

“Did you see it?” he asks her.

“I don’t know,” she says, she shrugs.

Then sees her computer before her—the staring screen.

11:14 AM

Sirens and flares, people standing around in uniforms and business attire.

Kyin pulling the hood over her head, sticking out her legs—shutting her lids tight.

Folding her arms—dozing.

12:39 PM

The waiter touching Kyin’s shoulder.

She wakes and looks at him—at her surroundings.

“Maybe you should go home,” he says.

Kyin looking through the window. The road cleared—cars’ lights shining driving through the wet.

“Can I,” she says—sitting rubbing her left eye, “can I have a triple flat white to go?”

He pauses—nods, walking back over and behind the counter.

The restaurant full now with a lunch crowd. Kyin looking around at them each—eating, chatting, texting, laughing.

Gathering her things, zipping her jacket and hanging her bag over her shoulder.

Taking the drink and paying, nodding.

Out—the rain less, the sidewalks and road yet wet. Cabs, cars slicing along the pavement.

Passes people walking with umbrellas, a man playing a saxophone, soggy bills in the open instrument case.

Down the escalator—down into the dark.

Down another escalator—standing on the right, her eyes closed as people pass on the left. The machine slow in carrying her down to the orange-floored bottom.

She steps off and checks the amount on her card. Then walks through the stiles.

Down another escalator to the platform.

Standing waiting—quiet.

1:17 PM

The train coming stopping.

Redline train, Glenmont.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

She steps on and sits, the train mostly empty.

Doors closing, step back to allow the doors to close.

The train bumps and rocks, lulling Kyin against the window. Through a few stops, she watches passengers come and go. A tall thin man with wild gray hair stands, holding the pole. He sways with the train, scratching his bottom.

Two teenage kids run through the doors and dive into a seat. One of them points at the man and begins laughing, and the other kid laughs, too.

Coming to her stop; she exits, riding up a series of escalators.

Out into the light.

Down the sidewalk—into an office building. Up an elevator.

A woman behind a desk. “Can I help you?”

“I’m here to see—um—I’m here for an eye appointment.”

“Name?”

“Choi—Kyin Choi.”

The woman looking down at her desk, then up, handing Kyin a clipboard.

“Ok. Just fill this out and she’ll be with you in a moment.”

2:47 PM

The doctor spins an apparatus before Kyin’s eyes.

“Push your head here,” she says.

Kyin obeys.

The doctor asks Kyin a series of questions.

Then measures her eye pressure.

They walk out into the main room.

“Well,” says the doctor, “you need glasses. And you have high eye pressure.”

“What does that mean?”

“Nothing—for now. But we’ll keep an eye on it. So, do you want contacts or glasses?”

The doctor standing above the sitting Kyin.

Kyin rubbing the bridge of her nose.

“I guess I don’t know,” she says.

The doctor smiles. “If you’d like to think it over, you can just give Kelly here a call when you’re ready, ok?”

Kyin nods. “Yes, I think I’ll do that—wait, what are these for, reading or distance?”

“You may not ever have any trouble reading. But you will need to start wearing lenses, even for driving.”

The doctor staring at Kyin.

“Great. Yes, ok. Just—I’ll get glasses. I don’t want contacts.”

“You don’t want to think it over?”

“No—that’s alright. Glasses.”

“Ok. I’ll turn you over to Kelly. And if you ever decide that you do want contact lenses, of course you can just give us a call. Nice meeting you, Kyin.”

“You, too. Thanks, doctor.”

4:17 PM

Out into the light—glasses in her bag.

Looking up, following the line of the buildings into the sky—grids of windows, the clouds covering sun.

She sends a text.

Text, 4:19 PM

Kyin: hpy hr?

Fiela: yes

Kyin: 6?

Fiela: yes

Kyin: Crime?

Fiela: yes, see you

Kyin: peace

Walking to the subway, passing then entering a pharmacy. Back the bright aisles to headache pills and menstrual pads, a bottle of water—then up to the front.

“Do you have a bathroom?”

The woman looking her over.

“No.”

“Do you know where the closest public restroom is?”

The woman calling over to the man standing behind the photography area.

He points. “Around the corner is a bookstore and some restaurants, ok?”

Kyin nods then pays. “Thanks,” she says.

While walking, she downs pills with water—finds a bookstore, riding the escalator to the upper floor, walking to the bathroom in the back.

Finds a stall, urinates then places a pad against the underwear, collecting the blood issuing from her vagina.

Back out, she browses the shelves—grabs then buys a book by Whitehead.

5:02 PM

Across and down into the metro—up a few stations to Columbia Heights.

Up onto the ground, she walks and finds *Crime Café*—takes a window-seat and orders a brown beer. Watching briefcases and heels walk to home.

Walkers holding cell phones and wooden-handled umbrellas.

A gust, Fiela pushes through the doors, sees Kyin in the corner.

“Hey!”

She sits—waves to the waiter.

“Crap it’s wet!”

Taking off her bag, her coat—“Wow, the fucking slow walkers out there today! Learn to fucking walk in the rain, people! I’ll have a—dammit, I need something to warm me up—Dad would have a toddy—do you have something warm and strong?”

The waiter hesitates, “Warm?”

Fiela looking at Kyin—crossing her eyes—then, to the waiter, “Well, I guess I’ll just have a Stoli on the rocks—and a—you have hot chocolate?” the waiter nods then leaves, and she continues, “So, any news?”

Shrugging Kyin. “Nothing, really—I need glasses.”

Batting lashes. “Oh, reeeally, my lovely? I wouldn’tve guessed. I’ve been wearing contacts since I was fifteen—I’m blind as a bat without em.”

Kyin biting her cheek. “That’s so weird. I had no idea that you wore contacts.”

“I never told you?” Fiela hanging her purse over her chair, “You must’ve seen me in the bathroom with em,” straightening her hair, “you’ve seen me drunk messing with those things, right?”

Kyin moving back against the window. “I guess I must’ve. I just never thought about it.”

“Well, I can see that, I guess. I don’t even think about em anymore. Except when my eyes dry out.”

Fiela takes her drinks from the waiter—sipping the chocolate hot, chasing it with a swallow of vodka.

“Oh, that’s good—yes! My new cold weather drink.”

She shivers then smiles. “You’ll look good in glasses. Sexy lady.”

And winks, chewing on an ice cube—the mug in her palms.

“Do you have them with you? Or did you have to order them?”

“They’re—I had to order them. What’s up with your boss?” asks Kyin.

“Oh—bleh,” Fiela pauses, drinking.

Then leaning forward.

“So, I have this client—I can’t pronounce his name, it’s something German with an oo sound, something like that—but anyway, he’s this really nice older guy, and all he wants is to finalize his green card for his wife—which is the kind of thing we do for our clients all the time, ok? So, I know how to do that kindof thing, because I had this Indian chemist

last year, and then a few months ago I had this Chinese physicist or something—actually, I don't really know what he did, something with IEEE, whatever that is —see, that's the thing, most of these guys, to try and figure out what it is that they really do, you need a degree in what they do, you know? I mean, the only people who know what the hell these people are talking about are people in their field—ok? Because they use all of this obscure terminology, and they've been at it so long they don't know how to talk normal, right?"

Again Fiela drinks—Kyin nodding. The waiter passes, and she raises her head, her hand—the waiter nodding.

Fiela continues, "So I tell this German guy, 'Ok, no problem, sir, I'll settle it up, should have it all worked out in less than a year.' Which may sound like a long time, but that's actually pretty fast for this thing, it's usually a crazy process which I don't even know much about—but then, my boss steps in, like—ok, he doesn't even read all the emails, right? He just happens upon one of this German guy's emails which I accidentally cc'd to him, and he emails—what's his name? Ulli?—he emails this guy and tells him no-can-do, that's not our thing, and anyway maybe he should find another lawyer—what the hell! Does he not want clients! Yo, dipshit, Ulli—or whatever his name is—was one of our biggest fucking clients last year, the least we could do is help his wife!"

The waiter bringing a brown beer— "I'll have another vodka," says Fiela.

Then finishes her hot chocolate. "God, that's good," she says, "A nice warm buzz!"

Cold wet bodies—petals, a wet bough—emerging from the metro tunnel. Kyin watching them walk past *Crime*.

"Well, that's pretty much it anyway," says Fiela. "I worked on it all day today, I refuse to work on it tonight, and I'll have to work on it tomorrow."

She bites the ice. "What about your brother?"

Kyin shrugging her mouth. "Who knows."

"He emailed you again—or called?"

"Emailed."

Nodding sipping biting Fiela. "Yeah," she says.

The door opening and closing bringing in cold air. Fiela pulling tight her blazer, bending over her drink.

"What time is it?" Looks for a clock—sees: 6:48 PM.

"Are you hungry?"

"I could eat."

They order pasta—long noodles entwined on a plate—little round tomatoes—onions—bread.

Homeward, they split—Fiela in a cab, Kyin walking.

Her phone vibrates; she answers.

Walks across Irving to 16th, talking, passing people walking talking.

Down Columbia, a group of Latino men standing laughing, down past CVS—a grizzled White man asking for money—she taps her thigh, then looks at him and shrugs.

The crowds grow—as she nears 18th, she weaves through bodies—business suits and skirts, various couples walking—baby carriages, dogs—a young twenty-year-old male and female standing chatting—waiting at 18th and Columbia for the light.

More people gathering, a man looking at her through the McDonald's glass, a group of people crossing Columbia—the light changes, she hangs up the phone and crosses 18th, a bicyclist passing on her right.

7:54 PM

Home, Kyin heads to the bathroom and changes her pad. Comes out and plugs in and turns on her computer. Then takes out her glasses and tries them on—stands before a mirror.

Takes off the glasses and rubs the bridge of her nose.

Then puts them again on, looking from various angles—profile, full, forty-five degrees.

Then carries her computer to the couch, grabbing a glass of water and clicking on the television. Putting on news—mute with captions—the computer on her lap. She checks her mail, opens her blog.

Cell, 7:39 PM

Kyin: Ian?

Ian: Hey—did you get my email?

Kyin: yeah, I emailed you back this morning—didn't you get it?

Ian: oh—no, I haven't had a chance to check it—so can you meet me?

Kyin: yeah, next weekend anytime—what's going on?

Ian: next weekend, ok—how about—Saturday for breakfast, what's a good breakfast place?

Kyin: here?

Ian: um—ok.

Kyin: you sure nothing's wrong?

Ian: nothing's wrong.

Kyin: ok, bye. I'll call you then.

Blog, 8:15 PM

Today a kid was shot by a cop.

Sips water.

Heels clicking outside her window.

Leaning back—Kyin closing her lids.

Her neighbor unlocking a door and slamming it shut.

Dogs bark, and dog-owners call out at them, telling them to *stop that right now*.

The sound of wet shoes squelching on wet sidewalks.

A quacking crow.

Legs out on the coffee table, she accidentally kicks a folder onto the floor.

Then stands and picks up the folder and opens it—sees sheets of paper with letters and numbers.

“Oh, yeah,” she says.

Then puts down the folder, grabbing her glass and walking to the kitchen—refilling the glass and again sitting, clicking the channel to local news.

Unmutes—watches the screen.

She sits up, leaning toward the television.

News, 9:03 PM

Female Anchor: Our top story today: tragedy in the District. A young boy shot by a police officer trying to protect a motorist. Jan has the full story. [cut to Jan, standing in the rain]

Reporter: Marie, I’m standing here at the intersection of Calvert and Connecticut in Woodley Park, which, earlier today, was the scene of a deadly tragedy. [cut to video with voiceover. The video shows a scene shot earlier in the day: police officers standing around a cordoned-off triangle.]

Reporter: Deandre Stephens was a bright boy, loved by all of his family and friends. [Cut to photographs of a young boy. Cut to a woman standing before a microphone]

Woman 1: I loved him so much. He was a beautiful boy—everyone loved him—he wouldn't hurt anyone.

[Cut back to the rainy triangle]

Reporter: But no longer will Deandre brighten his mother's day. Heidi Richmond, a motorist, tells her story. [cut to a woman standing before a microphone in the rain. Behind her is a car.]

Woman 2: I was in my car, and the arrow just turned green, and I turn to go and this boy comes running right in front of me! I almost hit him! Then all of sudden the car behind me rams into me, and my neck hurts. So I get out and see the officer yelling at the boy, and the boy shoots and then the officer shoots and kills him—that boy!

Reporter: Officer Robert Thompson was the officer that fired.

[cut to a police officer standing behind a microphone]

Man: He ran through the light. I, uh, yelled at him to stop, and he did. Then, he shoots at me, so I shoot back, uh, trying to defend myself, and there were pedestrians—civilians—about. And, uh, that's it.

[cut to Jan standing before the camera]

Reporter: With one shot, Officer Thompson killed Deandre, doing his duty to save a life, but in the end also taking a life. Jan Woodson, back to you.

Male anchor: Thanks, Jan. And we'll have more on that terrible shooting later. But first, here's today's weather—wet out there, huh, Fred?

Clicking the screen to mute.

Sitting clicking her computer. She does a number of searches for the story, all ending with the same basic summary.

Clicks open her blog.

Begins typing, keeping her eye on the news.

Blog, 9:15 PM

I was sitting writing, drinking coffee. Then suddenly a child was shot. A kid running from a police officer.

Ok—I need to think this through, get this all out so that I can see what I think about it.

He was running across the bridge, and I was watching him without watching him.

Then, suddenly, he runs through a red light, and a car almost hits him.

Weather, commercials.

Blog, 9:17 PM

But the car slams on its brakes and hits its horn, and the kid darts just in front of the front bumper. But the car behind the first car nails that first car—well, it sounded really loud, but it didn't look so bad.

So, there is this cop sitting there just outside the coffee place, and he jumps out and yells at the kid to stop.

It rained all day today (I think it's still drizzling out there now), but when this was happening it was pouring. I could barely see through the window. So I'm trying to see through the window, I see a woman get out of the first car, the one that was rear-ended. And I see the cop yelling at the kid, and the kid stops and is standing getting drenched. Then the cop is yelling at the woman, then he turns and shoots the kid. Then he runs up to the kid and is cursing, and he bends over the kid so I can't see anything.

That's it. That's what I keep thinking about over and over, trying to see something more than what I saw.

They came and took the boy away, but it just looked like he was dead. I need to get my head straight here. The news just had a story about the shooting, and I think that's the reporter that I saw at the scene. She showed up after the ambulance had already left with the boy. She just said that the boy fired a shot first and then the cop fired a shot. Where is she getting this information?

Ok, so now I'm not sure what the hell happened. And they showed the cop saying the same thing. And the first driver, too. The cop was pausing and not looking at the camera, but he looked sad. When it happened he was cursing and he was sad then, too. I don't know what the hell happened now. Wouldn't I have heard that other shot?

I don't even know what the hell gunshots sound like or how long it takes for their sound to reach someone's ears. But all I can remember hearing was one shot. Which didn't sound like what I thought gunshots sounded like. It was like *pop*. That's all. If I was at home in my apartment, I wouldn't think twice about it. Just this innocuous little sound. Pop. In movies it's always so much louder.

I can hear him yelling *fuck* in my head.

Sports.

Commercials.

Weather.
Rubbing her
head—clicks
off the
television.

Closes her computer, carrying it to the desk.

Then turns off the lights and lays on the couch. Her right hand covering her eyes.

Sleeping.

Tuesday, March 10th

Light drizzle, 56°

5:13 AM

A motorcycle pops—Kyin sitting quickly up from the cushions.

“What!” she soggily says.

Then, “Oh.”

Walking to the window. Nothing—yet dark, the rain discernable only from an angle.

She standing looking at the room. A hand on a hip.

Feet on rug then wood then tile. Into the bathroom, the shower—clothes on the floor, leaving the lights off—a darkened dousing.

Out—dried, dressed—the hair tressed.

6:19 AM

The slamming door, the jangling keys. The sound of her neighbor moving away down the hallway—the *bing-ing* sound of the elevator arriving.

Kyin to the window, looking down.

The woman slices through the spritzing, walking to the corner trash and throwing out a brown bag. Then to her car, driving off.

“What the fuck?” Kyin says.

Then turns and looks at the mirror above a low bookcase.

“What’s that about?” she says to that glassy essence.

“I don’t get it,” she says, pulling on her boots, twisting into her jacket.

Down the elevator, out into the rain.

“I just don’t get it,” she says, walking to the trash, grabbing the bag and tucking it into her jacket.

Passing a newspaper box, she stops—digs for change and pulls out a paper.

Back up to her apartment.

From the refrigerator, an energy drink.

Onto the couch, flipping to the local section.

Reads and drinks.

District Briefing

Boy killed in Incident Involving Police Officer

A young boy was killed yesterday morning after running through a red light and from a police officer. The boy, Deandre Stephens, was shot and killed by Officer Robert Thompson after firing at the officer who had asked him to stop. Witnesses say that the officer asked the boy several times to surrender before shots were fired. The boy's family is calling for an investigation. DC police have not issued a statement.

—Allison Henderson

On her way to the kitchen, she pulls out

the bag, emptying its contents onto the table: an envelope, within which is a file, within which are several sheets of paper, each covered in numbers and symbols.

She finds cereal and milk, carrying the bowl to the couch and clicking on the local news.

News, 7:10 AM

Traffic Reporter: Because of the rain, no doubt. Just keep that in mind today when you're out there on the roads, especially for those of you coming across those bridges. Back to you, Julia.

Female Anchor: Alright, thanks Debbie. DC's police chief is in some hot water today after issuing a statement about DC's gun laws that has angered some lawmakers. We'll see what local residents think about the chief's statements, when after the break John Jones goes out for our "Word on the Street"

With her right hand, she reaches for and holds up her glasses before her eyes—taking them away—then again putting them in front.

Finishing her bowl, setting it on the coffee table.

Clicks on the mute and closed-captioning buttons.

Then puts on the glasses, looking at the screen—takes them off—and again puts them on.

Grabs her computer, bringing it back to the couch—opening her blog and mail.

Types while watching the muted news.

<p>Blog, 7:16 AM</p> <p>The same story in the paper that was on the news.</p> <p>This is so confusing/frustrating.</p> <p>More rain today, thank god. Rain is my favorite weather (see also: blustery, autumn weather). I'm not one of those people that loves the rain because it's depressing; quite the opposite—I love the rain because, for me, it makes me feel alive inside. It's about as joyous toward life as I ever feel (see also: post-migraine). When I breathe, I feel as if I can smell everything. Just—I feel so great on rainy days—I only wish it rained more often in this city.</p>	<p>Email Inbox, 7:16 AM</p> <p>From: Fielá</p> <p>Hey, you hungover? I didn't know I was drunk last night until standing in my hallway I realized I gave that cabbie way too much money. C'est la vie.</p>	<p>Taking her glasses off.</p> <p>Again putting them on.</p>
<p>into the couch, her feet on the coffee table.</p> <p>Neighbors begin moving down the hallway. The on the sidewalk.</p> <p>Whistling birds.</p> <p>High heels cli-clacking.</p> <p>Unmutes the news.</p>	<p>Was that pasta the greatest pasta ever, or was it because I was feeling pretty good? Please confirm.</p> <p>Also, did I really just invent the greatest cold weather alcoholic drink of all time (vodka and hot choco)? Please confirm.</p> <p>Peace.</p>	<p>Leaning back</p> <p>sounds of dogs</p>
	<p>Email Outbox, 7:27 AM</p> <p>Reply: Fielá</p> <p>You were a drunk ass, to be sure. I am fine this lovely morning. Email me later today.</p> <p>Peace.</p>	

News, 7: 35 AM

Male Anchor: From a story we first broke to you last night about a terrible tragedy of a boy shot while trying to shoot a police officer. The parents of Deandre Stephens are now calling for an investigation into the shooting. They claim that the officer involved did not act properly, and they want some answers. Our inquiries to the DC police were left unanswered, though we have found out that the officer involved, Officer Robert Thompson, has been placed on administrative leave.

Female Anchor: Also in the news, a new study revealed yesterday that eating too much chicken may raise the risk of cancer.

Blog, 7:36 AM

Lucky that this is the rainy season.

Again my neighbor threw out a mysterious brown bag filled with mysterious pages filled with mysterious symbols.

I feel as if I'm in the beginning stages of collecting her trash without even knowing why. I just followed an impulse, but something tells me there is something to those symbols. She could be crazy—but I don't buy it. I see her passing in the halls, and she seems normal, says hi, smiles.

Again the news is confirming the same story from last night. They're talking about the family challenging the police officer's actions. This is pretty standard, though, when someone gets shot by the cops. I mean, it's not like any of the family members were actually there on the scene. So their challenging the officer just comes off as them being angry that their son is dead. Which is understandable. They've placed him on "administrative leave," which is just a way of placating the parents. In a few weeks, he'll be back. I mean, this story is only a paragraph now, so the officer's coming back won't even make the news.

Clicks off the news.

Types in a search for "Officer Robert Thompson"—finding only the same stories from the same news outlets.

Then, using the white pages, she

types in: "Thompson, Robert," for a search within the District—and finds an address and phone number: *2500 Quincy Street, NE; 1760349.*

She carries the computer to her desk, plugs it in, and pulls out a notebook from the top drawer—writes the number down.

Officer Robert Thompson,
2500 Quincy Street NE
176-0349

To the kitchen—a tall drink of water, filtered.

Cars louder through the window.

Back to the computer, typing the address into a map.

In her bag—a book, camera, notebook, laptop, phone, gum, pen, Excedrin.

Socks and sneakers.

The jacket zipped, she steps quick—through the locked door and down the hall, the elevator, the exit. Climbing up to Connecticut, waving for a cab.

“South Dakota and Quincy.”

“South Dakota?” The driver rubbing his chin.

She settling into the seat.

“Just,” says Kyin, “it’s behind Catholic University—up in that area.”

The driver rubbing his chin.

“You know Michigan? Here, just—just take Florida right here, that’ll work.”

The driver pulling out—down Connecticut.

Shaking his head.

Florida—stop lights and signs.

Leaning Kyin. “Now—work your way up to Georgia—if we cut across, we’ll get to Michigan.”

The driver frowning rubbing his chin.

Lights.

Coming up Georgia—cutting across to Michigan.

“Here,” says Kyin, “once you cross the bridge, that’s fine.”

The cab stopping just off Michigan.

Leaning Kyin handing him cash.

8:39 AM

Stepping out—begins walking up Quincy.

A row of houses repetitive. She sees students walking—bags and backpacks, the wet stepping tracks. Passing homes with porches and columns, chimneys and screen doors.

Up and down hills. The streets quiet.

The sun slices through clouds, spots of light on the wet sidewalk, the cracked road.

Coming to a monastery—sandy buildings with tile roofs—statues of men wearing robes—arched walkways. The grounds green.

Continuing around the monastery. Otis—back to Quincy.

Nearing 2500—takes a photograph.



Notebook, 10:10 AM

Photographs of Officer Robert Thompson's street and house.
Hard to tell if someone is home or not—though a police car is
parked just off the road.

A quiet street in a quiet neighborhood.

Never been in this part of the city before.

Very much has a “family” vibe to it.

Makes a note.

Continuing down the street, taking pictures while she walks.

Moves onto the lawn—taking pictures of the cruiser.

Looking behind herself, to her left—steps back out into the street.

Looking at each of the houses in front of and behind herself—when she hears the sound
of steps on wood, a man speaking.

“Hello?”

Turning to see him standing on the porch.

“Hello,” says Kyin.

The man standing staring.

"Can I help you?" he asks.

"Oh—I apologize. Yes—I'm a reporter. I'm wondering if you'd be willing to answer a few questions?"

He coming down the steps. "Were you taking photographs?"

"Oh—yes—just general background shots of the area. Don't worry, I won't use them in the story or anything; they're just to give me my bearings while I'm writing the story."

Coming closer to her—"You know, they weren't supposed to release my name. Or that interview—they caught me off guard. Got me in trouble."

Then, "What did you want to ask?"

"Well—ok, great, thank you. Ok—well—was it raining when the shooting took place?"

Coming closer—"Was it raining?"

"Yes," she asks, stepping back. "When the—when the incident happened?"

He stops, looking at her—folds his arms.

"Yes," he says. "It was pouring. The rain was in my face.

"Then I heard a shot and I—instinctively—I shot back. Don't bother writing anything down, there's nothing more to tell. This wouldn't be a story if his parents didn't file a complaint.

"Look, I feel for them, ok?"

She nods.

"But I don't know what to tell them," he says, "there's nothing I could've done.

"Lives were in danger," he says.

Then stands and looks at her.

The crossed arms pulling the shirt tight.

Again, she nods.

"Well," she says—and sticks out her hand. "Thank you for your time. I'm sure this must be hard on you."

"Yes," he says, ignoring her hand. "It has been.

"If you want any more information, contact the department. Don't come taking pictures of my house."

Nodding Kyin.

"Ok," she says, "thank you for your time."

Quickly turning and walking back down Quincy—Otis.

Atop a hill, she looks again and sees an empty street—taking out her camera and shooting another photograph.

Turns and ends up coming down 12th Street. Sees and steps into a coffee shop.

12:27 PM

The place quiet.

The woman behind the counter smiles at Kyin smiling back. Kyin orders coffee black and a tuna bagel. Then finds a seat, pulling out and turning on her laptop—dropping her things under the table. The big windows looking out onto the now-bright day.

Waiting for her computer to ready, she stands and walks about.

Then—her order called, she sits and eats, looking out on the street.

Opens her blog—pecking at keys with her left hand, eating and drinking with her right.

Blog, 12:43 PM

Sitting here in a cute little café in a part of the city I've never been in.

I want to write down what he said to me.

Ok, so I was out there and I started taking pictures—at first I just wanted to take pictures of the street, and then I started taking pictures of his house. I didn't plan to—just suddenly the camera was taking pictures, and I wasn't thinking.

So I was taking wide pictures of his house, then zooming in, getting closer. And then I was on his lawn—shit! Crazy. Thinking back, I don't know what I was doing—it's like the camera just took over. Pictures of the cop car, then close-ups of the house, and I think I even took one peeking through the window.

That last one must've been what did it. Because I was back out on the street and I heard him come out. I felt like my heart was going to explode talking to him. He was a really intimidating guy.

So I said I was a reporter—I don't know where I came up with that, but luckily he didn't ask for what newspaper. And I asked him if it was raining, and the whole time he is looking at me the way a cop looks at you, and I'm trying to look back at him serious like a reporter, but I probably looked scared, but then he said, "Yes, it was raining—he shot and then I shot. That's all." And he said something else, but I can't really remember what, I just wanted to get out of there.

The woman
behind the
counter
comes out
and props
open the
door, a
breeze
spilling in.

Begins
typing with
two hands,
pausing now
and again to
take a bite
from the
bagel, a sip
of coffee.

Bright orange walls and quiet conversations.

Finishing eating, Kyin walks to the counter and orders another cup of coffee, throwing away her trash.

Then, walking back to her seat, she sees through the window Officer Robert Thompson walking into a convenience store. Keeping her sight focused on the store's entrance, she turns off her computer, packing her things back into her bag.

Then, holding her coffee—her diagonal strap—she sits watching.

Some ten minutes pass before he comes out—carrying a plastic bag, turning toward Otis. Kyin follows through the open door, walking slowly behind.

Down Otis—Bunker Hill. The sounds of more cars running on the busy road—honks and tires and engines. The sidewalk, too, is busier—students walking toward Catholic University, men and women standing chatting.

The officer stops to talk to a group of road workers leaning on shovels around a hole in the ground.

“What’s going on?”

“Ask him,” says one of the men, pointing down.

The officer leaning over the hole, looking down.

“What’s going on?” he yells.

A moment—a man pops his yellow-helmet head out of the hole.

“Water main,” he says.

“Serious?”

The man laughs. “Always the same,” he says. “Patching and praying.”

The other men chuckling.

The officer continues down Bunker Hill—Kyin following.

Down into the metro.

Then back up and onto the platform. Kyin standing behind a group of students talking.

Officer Thompson stands on the other end, taking from his plastic bag a magazine.

Slowly flipping the pages.

The train then comes, clacking along the track, stopping against the red tiles, the blinking orbs.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

The car rocking—passing trains and buildings—New York Avenue.

At each stop, she looks through to the next car, watching his sitting back. More people piling into the stalls.

At Chinatown, he steps off—Kyin following slowly behind.

Up and up and out.

2:38 PM

Stepping onto H Street, across and into a restaurant. Kyin waits outside a few minutes—hesitates—then enters. She quick sits in the waiting room—sees the officer in the dining area.

He stands with a woman, pecking her cheek—then sitting. Handing the woman the bag.

The host comes over to sitting Kyin.

“One?”

Looking up at him looking down with a stern face.

She bites her cheek—says, “Yes, one.”

He nods and begins walking toward the officer—Kyin stopping, “Could I sit over there?” she asks, pointing to a window seat.

The host stopping—“Fine,” he says, walking slapping down the menu.

The officer and the woman talking.

Sitting Kyin.

A waitress comes, bringing tea. Kyin ordering dumplings and miso.

Notebook, 3:17 PM

Eating at FK in Chtown.

He’s with a woman—handed her a bag. Who knows what.

She’s dressed in a smart suit.

They are eating, and I’m sitting here looking at his back, her smile.

I can’t hear their words, but she has a French accent.

Another beautiful transitional-spring day.

The feel of wetness looming.

Then takes out her notepad.

More come into the restaurant, sitting obscuring Kyin’s view of the couple.

She goes to the bathroom and changes her pad, on the way back coughing—covering her face with her fist.

Chopsticks dipping jiaozi, the comfort of miso.

Susurrous sounds surrounding—she sipping tea.

Through the window, then, sitting waiting, she sees them on the sidewalk, walking.

“Aisshh,” she says.

Quick calls to the waitress—leaves cash and the restaurant, fast walking down H Street.

Continues across, now running—stopping at H and 10th, breathing.

Looking over at the large parking lot—the walkway, the buses queued. There—the woman, walking weaving through cars.

Long legs bending into a Benz.

Notebook ready—Kyin waits for the passing car, writing down its license plate.

The brake lights—the car turning then gone.

Looking around, up at buildings, the street signs.

Down G Street, passing hotels and tourists. Down

and down into Metro Center, the crowds of

passengers coming and going, standing waiting listening to squawking intercom voices.

The long arched tunnels, the vast coffered ceiling.

Red hexagonals, a honeycomb floor.

Redline train, Shady Grove.

Doors opening, left side. Please stand back and allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

No room to sit, she stands, holding the metal bar. A man next to her with sweaty armpits.

Pencil skirts and flats and heels, the suitcases with broken wheels.

Two stops—off at Dupont. The escalator plodding up to the light.

Climbs Connecticut to home.

Notebook, 3:47 PM

D FG8192

DC Diplomat Tags

The Woman

About 5’8”, Black, skinny, 45ish

French-African?

Monday, May 11th

Clear, 63°

5:43 AM

Birds trilling, calling—Kyin snapping up from the cushion.

“Huh?”

The birds continuing twittering.

“Oh,” she says, rolling on her side.

From the floor, she grabs the remote, clicking on the local news.

Watching hearing the sounds of morning.

Half sleeping seeing.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Soon to breakfast: coffee with an egg over easy. The knife cutting through toast.

The sound of her neighbor—the slammed door, keys jangling. Kyin waits; then walks to the window, yet eating.

Then finishes her meal, slipping on her coat and shoes.

Out and down to the trash—grabbing the brown bag.

Back up to her apartment. To the kitchen, refilling her coffee. Slides the folder from the bag, examining the pages as she sips, making notes.

Finishing the mug, carrying the folder to the bookcase. From the top she grabs a marker, writing the date on the folder, then sliding it into a row.

Again refilling the mug.

Then turns on her computer and carries it to the couch. On the television screen is a helicopter shot of flames flicking tongues swallowing trees. The ticker reads: *Santa Barbara wildfires contained.*

Mutes and CCs the news.

Leans back into the cushions, closing her lids—sipping coffee, rubbing her forehead.

The sound of rain.

7:25 AM

News, 5:47 AM

Female anchor: Thanks for that story, Amy. From flooding in North Dakota, we have the opposite problem here, don't we Dave?

Weatherman: Well, I wouldn't go that far, Julie, but we're certainly in need of more rain around here. We've had some, but we need even more. It's looking like we might get some a few days from now, but right now it's keeping sunny.

From the coffeetable, glasses from their case. Crossed legs, frames against face.
Again glances at the television—a car bending around a mountain road, *zero percent APR*—pops the frames up into her hair and laps the computer.
Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 7:29 AM
Neighbor 22
File deposit at roughly 6AM
5 pages.
Subject entered car and headed West toward Connecticut Avenue.
Includes the followed standard codes:
Page1: $23x + 23y; \sin 2x - 3;$
Page2: Energy runs green and blue
Page 3: $3xy - 2b + 4; 1B2WE7$

Clicks open her email.

A man outside the window, hacking.

Motorcycle engine, hammers hitting nails.

Email Inbox, 7:37 AM
From: Mom
Kyin,
Have you heard from Ian?
Make sure you drink enough water.

Love,
Mom

Email Outbox, 7:40 AM
Reply: Mom
Mom,
We might meet.
Call me,

Kyin

Two dog walkers stop on the sidewalk and begin talking about their dogs.

“His coat is so beautiful.”

“How old is she?”

ThunkChat, 7:43 AM

Aether: My argument is that philosophy is always a backward glance. There is no philosophy of either the present or future. So we can look at previous centuries and how they looked at things, but when we try to talk about our current situation, all we have can do is flounder about.

Vatbrain83: Minerva and her owl.

Becomingbeing: I kindof agree. I think most everything we do, all of our actions, are guided by gut feelings—our past experiences and our biology-culture matrix. It is only after the fact, the event, that we reflect back and rationalize what we just did. Life is lived post-hoc.

Swampman: well, then, those post-hoc reflections aren't just ineffectual nothings. They inform our future gut-guided actions.

2cyborg: what about technology?

Becomingbeing: technology shapes our being in the world.

Vatbrain83: which means???

Becomingbeing: technology is the storehouse of cultural memory. Interacting with technology pulls us toward a future action while we collide with a cultural past.

LanGame: that statement sounds meaningless.

2cyborg: give an example, BB.

Becomingbeing: If I use a Nikon camera, I am using the memory-machine of a particular culture in a particular era. Shakespeare didn't have a camera to use as a memory aid. The Nikon camera is a modification of all cameras previous. It could not have been created without the work of all those other camera inventions—Fox Talbot, the Kodak point-and-shoot, etc. Those modifications over time are a kind of cultural memory. Yet I use the camera to frame an individual moment. When I frame that moment, I am looking to the future, I am thinking ahead. But, at the same time, that act freezes the past. So, at the same moment, in the same act, I am freezing the present into the past and future.

Aether: I'm not sure what a camera has to do with the future

Looking to the window then floor—clicking open chat.

The rain slows to a stop.

Legs stretching out onto the table.

The sun gradually pushing through the window.

ThunkChat, 8:17 AM

2cyborg: when you use technology, you are thinking about the end goal of your use. When you use a hammer, you don't think about the hammer; instead, you think about the nail.

Becomingbeing: thanks, cyborg. when I use a camera, I am thinking about the picture—about what it will look like. I am thinking about that also when someone is taking a picture of me. So, at the same moment, I am thinking about what I look like now (“Is my hair straight?”) and what I will look like in the future-past (“What will this photograph look like 10 years from now?”).

Vatbrain83: you all seem to be arguing that the mind is ineffectual. That our thoughts are just distractions to keep us occupied. What about when I plan something a week ahead of time, and then after a week I accomplish that plan? The mind maps everything out.

LanGame: language is for planning. language is also a technology. Language allows us to plan for the future. We can't have “gut feelings” about something that hasn't happened yet, unless we first put that future into language (for example, we can make ourselves cry by imagining a loved one's death). We can only have pre-reflective gut feelings within the present.

Becomingbeing: ah—maybe you're right, vb. Maybe it's all just jargon—philosophy may be therapeutic, but does it accomplish anything proactive? Sometimes philosophy seems so damn pointless to me. The unexamined life may not be worth living, but the overexamined life is not lived—it is only examined. Peace.

Carries her laptop to the desk, plugging it in.

To the kitchen, cleaning the counter, the coffee machine.

Then to the shower.

9:19 AM

Dressing, throws the towel on the couch. Socks and jeans and shirt and a thin jacket—shoes, bag (laptop, camera, notebook).

Begins walking her bike up to and across Connecticut. Passing the Chinese Embassy, she steps onto the bike, riding down into Kalorama.

A road of mansions, a gated castle—the French flag—more mansions. Embassies, senator's and ambassador's homes.

Downhill on the brakes, uphill onto 24th Street—off the bike, continuing down the quiet road.

Coming out on S Street, she finds a place to sit, a patch of trees; pulls out her notebook, her pen, a book for reading.

Sits and watches across Massachusetts—the Cote d'Ivoire Embassy.

The cars honk and whizz past Kyin, moving up and down The Row.

10:58 AM

A car pulls into the Embassy driveway. A woman steps out.

Kyin closes her book, putting it into her bag. Pulls out her camera and puts on her glasses.

Zooms in on the woman and takes a picture. Then takes a picture of the license plate.

Begins writing.

Notebook, 11:07 AM

D FG8192

DC Diplomat Tags

Subject—"Sabine"—arrives at the Embassy.

Enters, carrying a briefcase.

Leaves the car in the driveway.

She waits, watching.

11:35 AM

The woman exits the Embassy, a man following behind her. The woman looks back, talking to the man, he moving beside her—they smile. Then enter the car, the woman in the driver's seat.

Quick Kyin packs her things and steps onto her bike.

The car sliding out onto Massachusetts, headed away from Dupont. Traffic keeps the pace slow, yet Kyin falls behind. Climbing up the gradual hill, past the Naval Observatory. She peddles fast.

Sleek black car in the wet spring sun.

In the distance, the car turning left. Kyin stands on the bike, stomping, climbing.

Speeding across traffic, the car ahead, turning again—right. The road now flat, she leans forward, skimming next to parked sedans.

Heads down Wisconsin—down the steep hill packed with cars.

Leaning back into the brakes.

At M Street, she turns and slows. Pedestrians and cabs. A long line of vehicles crawling.

Skidding Kyin stopping at a coffee shop.

12:11 PM

With warm coffee in hand, Kyin sets up shop, unpacks her bag.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 12:13 PM

I went to the Embassy and waited. She showed up at 11:07 and went inside, carrying a briefcase. At 11:25, she came outside with a man (without the briefcase). They drove up Mass Ave and turned left. I thought they were taking a cut across to Wisconsin, and maybe they were, but I lost them. I'm trying to figure out a better way to follow them next time. This is the 3rd time I've lost them. Been watching her for almost 2 months now, and still nothing new. I'm guessing they were just going to lunch, so I'll head back to the Embassy in a bit.

The Georgetown Crowd:

- 1) Tall blonde 35 yrs old with 4-inch heels and bug sunglasses and Gucci bag.
- 2) 50-year old man with sharp grey suit on cellphone, expensive shoes.
- 3) Three asian teens laughing, wearing urban chic with expensive neon sneakers—can't understand what language they're speaking (not English or Korean).
- 4) Two 40-something women just outside my window, dressed to the nines, laughing and holding bags from D&D. The one on the left is waving her hand around, a big fat diamond on her finger, gold on her wrists.

Thank you, Georgetown people, for making me feel fat and poor. Tonight I must 1) exercise and 2) develop a plan to make money.

Looking through the window, she watches people walking.

The lunch crowd continues to file in. Kyin spreads out her things, covering the table.

Finishing her coffee, she looks up and sees a man looking at her. He motions to the table. "Oh—go ahead—I'm just leaving," she says.

And packs her things and exits.

Outside, the sidewalk is crowded—Kyin pushes and wends across to 31st Street, slowly stepping up the quiet hill. Turning on P, she begins biking—stopping on the bridge.

Leaning against the rail and looking down. Turning and looking across—another bridge in the distance, cars below.

A blanket of trees.

Then back on the bike, turning and climbing.

Climbing.

Pausing to sit on a bench.

2:39 PM

Continuing along the empty side streets, Kyin comes up to a museum. She hitches her bike and enters, handing them her bag.

Quiet rooms—men in corners standing with arms against their chests.

Picasso, Braque.

A stairway.

Homer, Mondrian, Rothko.

A man and a woman stand looking at a Stieglitz.

The man with a baby-blue button-up. “What is—oh, from *Equivalents*, it says.”



They stand silent.

The woman in a beige boned skirt.

“Equivalent to what?” she asks.

Kyin continuing through the warren.

Empty space.

Then returning down. Into a café to buy water bottled.

Finishing the bottle and buying another.

The sun mixing with the breeze, she walks on the sidewalk shady.

4:44 PM

Home, Kyin holds a glass against her head.

Walks to window, pulling the blinds and lifting the lower sash.

To her bag on the coffee table—pulling out her laptop, carrying it to her desk and plugging it in, turning it on.

To the bathroom, sitting to defecate—washing hands.

Again to the kitchen for water, using a paper towel to grab an apple. Clicking on the television, the mute then CC buttons.

Grabbing a book on cryptography from the table. She reads and watches.

Receives a text.

Text, 5:38 PM
Fiela: so tired
Kyin: go home
Fiela: soon
Kyin: email me

Slices the apple thin.

Grabs her laptop—does a search —“cryptography.”

Reads and watches and searches.

Placing the core on the table.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 6:10 PM
It seems that maybe I would need a degree in cryptography to break some codes. So, I have no way of knowing if her writings are some complex code or just random schizophrenic writing.
One thing, though. Not everything in a code is meaningful. So, some words or phrases are just filler, distractions—red herrings. And some are just signals. They can be a kind of phatic communication—code “small talk”.
So, when people in the world say, “Hi, how are you? Nice weather,” that is code for: [I am being friendly. I am passing the time.]
In some codes, a sequence that is used over and over can be a form of this small talk.
In my neighbor’s writings, there are number of “phrases,” or codes, that are repeated over and over. For instance, “Energy runs green and blue.” This could just be a signal meaning, for instance, [End paragraph] or [that’s how things go].

On the screen, the host is talking about illegal immigrants. He asks questions to a man and a woman.

A commercial: an oil company—

We’re committed to going green.

Sends a text.

Text, 6:36 PM

Kyin: home?

Fiel: yes. Malbec is love.

Kyin: ha. What's dinner?

Fiel: dunno. You?

Kyin: thinking

Stands, walking to look in the cabinets.

The refrigerator.

Walks back to the couch and sits.

Flips.

Calls.

Cell, 6:49 PM

Kongming's Kitchen: Hello?

Kyin: Yes, I'd like an order for delivery?

Kongming's: Address?

Kyin: West Belmont, Apartment 444

Kongming's: 444?

Kyin: Yes. I'd like an order of TVP General Tso's.

Kongming's: That everything?

Kyin: And a sixpack of Lowenbrau.

Kongming's: Ok, cash?

Kyin: Yes.

Kongming's: Ok, 16 dollars. 15 minutes.

On the screen: the host is talking to two heads, a man and a woman. The man is yelling while the woman grins.

The sounds of sirens calling into the late evening.

Kyin places the laptop on the coffee table.

Stretching out onto the couch. Listening to the sounds of the street.

Her arm draping over her head.

7:07 PM

Up from the cushions, down to the lobby.

"Any packages for 444?"

"444—let me check."

The concierge back to the office—back out to Kyin. "Here."

A black box.

Kyin signs. "Thanks," she says.

The man in the motorcycle helmet knocking on the door.

Kyin walks over—“Kongming’s?”

“444?”

“That’s me.”

They exchange—cash for the bag.

“Thanks.”

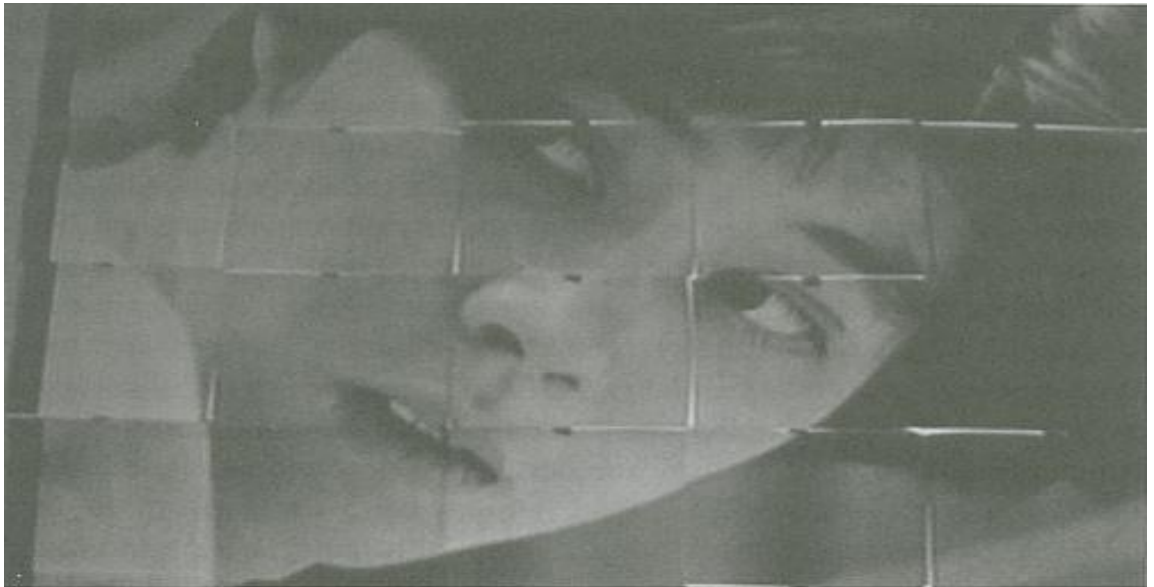
He nods, flipping down the visor.

7:33 PM

On the couch, eating, drinking. From the coffeetable’s drawer, she pulls out a carrying case of DVDs. Flips through and selects one—puts it into the player and sits. Glasses on her nose.

Clicks play.

Eating, drinking, watching, listening.



Feet on the table.

8:50 PM

The film paused, Kyin sits with knees bent, feet on the cushions.

“Ok,” she says aloud.

“Yeah.

“I dunno.”

Takes off her glasses, rubbing her face.

From the kitchen, a large glass of water. Opening the box—a poof of white tissue paper.

A note.

Kyin,
Hold on to this for me.
It is TRUTH.
Please burn this note and don't tell anyone,
not even mom.
Love,

Ian

Finishes the water.

At the bottom of the box, a black one-inch cube—black rock.

Clicks open her email.

Another glass of water.

Email Outbox, 9:13 PM
To: Mom
Mom,
Have you spoken to Ian recently?
I'm worried that maybe he's gone
off his meds.
Call me tomorrow.

Kyin

Carrying the glass, she walks to the television, pushing off the power. Turns to her CD player, looking through the discs laying on top. Selects one and pushes play.

Song, 9:20 PM
Schubert, D960
Sonata

Mitsuko Uchida

The music begins.

To the couch, laying her arm over her eyes.

She pulls the blanket from the top of the cushions—sleeps.

Sunday, June 7th

Sunny, humid, 83°

9:37 AM

Dogs barking.

Silent Kyin walks to and closes the window. Turns on the AC. To the kitchen, a glass of water filtered. Slowly dresses in shorts shirt socks shoes. Onto the treadmill for 30 minutes.

10:12 AM

Kyin on the couch, a handtowel on her head. Feet on the coffeetable, water in her hand. Clicks on the television. Flips through channels. Stops on the news.

Half watches, half closes her eyes.

Drinking water.

Kyin slowly stands, walking to turn off the AC.

Opening the window.

News, 10:13 AM

Male Anchor: A terrorist caught aboard a flight toward Minneapolis by passengers. He was brought to the ground first by a man flying home from Britain to see his family.

Female Anchor: Also in the news, a student attempts a shooting rampage, killing one before the gun jammed in Wisconsin. Police have a teenage girl in custody.

Male Anchor: But first, back to our top story.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

She sees children walking with parents.

A realtor standing with a couple, pointing at buildings.

Into the shower.

11:00 AM

Drying, she throws the towel in the laundry closet.

Stepping into clothes: jeans, a navy button-up.

Out toward 18th Street, makes a call.

Walking up Columbia, turns on the music in her ear.

Cell, 11:23 AM

Fiela: Hey.

Kyin: You there yet?

Fiela: Not yet—oh, maybe in a half hour or so?

Kyin: Ok, see you then.
I'm just grabbing a coffee.

Fiela: Peace.

Into *Café Cliché*.

Waits in line for ten minutes.

The cashier yawning taking her order.

11:33 AM

Herbie Hancock

Watermelon Man

11:39 AM

Ravel

Le Tombeau de Couperin

Orpheus Chamber

Orchestra

“Yes?”

“Triple flat white to go, please.”

The cashier sighing.

Waiting another twenty minutes.

A girl bringing the order; she thanks her.

12:11 PM

They meet at Malcolm X Park. Fiela with a blanket.

Walking past Jeanne d’Arc—the drummers gathering—the skyline.

The city.

Down the stairs, they find a spot to sit. A side each, spreading the quilt onto the grass.

Fiela taking off her shirt—a bikini top underneath.

Fiela reading *People*. Kyin reading a book.

The sights and sounds of early summer.

They read.

James J. Gibson

The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception

Page 203

We live boxed-up lives. Our ancestors were always looking around. They surveyed the environment, for they needed to know where they were and what there was in all directions. Children pay attention to their surroundings when allowed to do so. Animals must do so. But we adults spend most of our time *looking at* instead of *looking around*. In order to look around, of course, one must turn one’s head.

1:37 PM

"You hungry?" asks Fiela.

"In a bit," says Kyin.

Fiela turns onto her stomach—sleeping.

Kyin puts down her book, the open face against the ground. She looks over at Fiela. Then around, looking behind herself.

Up above, a White man is leaning over the railing, looking at them—he looks away. Kyin watches him, her hand flat against her forehead.

The sounds of the drummers' circle.

He stands there for some time, looking toward the Monument. Then looks again at Kyin—staring—then, seeing her looking back, he moves away, out of sight.

Quick Kyin moves up the hill, climbing the stairs.

At the top, a crowd. Drummers and dancers and people sitting talking, watching.

Children run, chasing each other and kicking balls into the grass. The man is moving slowly, hands in his pockets. At the northeast corner, he stops and sits.

His left leg resting on his right leg.

Six-foot-two—early 30s—shaved head—rust beard—a white button-up.

She watches him.

2:03 PM

The man yet sitting, Kyin returns to Fiela, touching her shoulder.

"You ready to eat?"

"Huh?" Fiela turning her head.

The sounds of the drummers.

"You fell asleep. You ready to eat?"

"Oh—God, yes, I'm hungry," she says.

They stand, folding the blanket, gathering their things.

Walking across Euclid.

Burritos from *Pepitos*. Carrying them up Columbia, sitting in the brick park.

"What I don't understand," says Fiela, eating, "is how someone can be famous, making millions of dollars by doing nothing."

Eating Kyin, the sauce running down her hand, dripping onto her pants.

Fiela looks at her, holding water bottled. "You know? These dumb bitches," she says, drinking, "letting themselves be filmed. Reality TV. And that's all they have to do!"

Eating, shaking her head.

A large Latina woman walks by—jean shorts and flip flops. She smiles.

Behind her running two children eating flavored ice cones.

Fiela nodding toward the woman. “Why don’t they ever do reality shows about someone like her? Instead we’ve got these dumb blond bitches, bringing us blondes down.”

The cars fast up and down 16th.

A motorcycle idling on Harvard. The light turns, and the motorcycle guns left onto 16th, just missing a truck.

Horns honk.

The two slowing their eating, leaning back into the bench.

“Wow,” says Kyin—patting her stomach.

3:10 PM

Into Columbia Heights—Fiela’s apartment. Sounds in the kitchen.

“Hello!” calls Fiela.

“Hey, Tisha,” says Kyin.

“Oh—hey,” says Tisha.

The two coming into the kitchen.

“Too damn humid,” says Fiela.

She walks over to the AC and hits it with her palm.

Tisha is chopping onions—she smiles at them, tears in her eyes.

“Good to see you, Kyin,” wiping the corner of her eye.

“Don’t get all misty-eyed on me.”

From the fridge, Fiela grabbing waters, two.

“You never cook,” she says.

Tisha nodding. “I thought I’d try,” she says.

Fiela drinking walking to the television.

“So,” says Tisha, looking at Kyin, “you still looking for a job?”

The sounds of the screen.

Shrugging Kyin.

Tisha chopping nodding. “You’ll find something,” she says. Again looking up, asking, “Can I ask—how are you for money?”

“No,” says Kyin. “I’m fine.”

The onions into a pan. Tisha turning the heat low.

Fiela laughing, yelling at the images. "Idiot!" she says.

"I've got enough for a while," says Kyin.

Washing and chopping potatoes russet.

"Yeah," says Tisha. "I'm still thinking about going back getting a Masters. You know, at Howard it's actually not that expensive for a Masters in Art."

She looks at Kyin—Kyin nodding.

"The problem is," potatoes into the pan, "I feel like I—"

"Hey, Kyin, come in here!" Fiela yells. "You gotta see this!"

"Like I should have a plan first. What do I want to do afterwards, you know?"

"Maybe you'll just figure it out later."

"Kyin!"

"Alright," says Kyin, walking to Fiela.

On the screen, a commercial.

"Ah, you missed it."

5:15 PM

Kyin home with water, sitting listening to the AC.

Clicks open chat.

ThunkChat, 5:20 PM

Aether: but that doesn't tell us what consciousness is.

Becomingbeing: who gives a damn "what consciousness is"? all those dusty old philosophical questions are so damn boring. All they do is produce paper.

Swampman: consciousness is as consciousness does.

2cyborg: yes, all consciousness is outside, in the world. Consciousness is directed to things in the world.

Becomingbeing: "all consciousness is consciousness of something" —intentionality (except I hate jargons).

Vatbrain83: yeah, you hate jargons, don't you?

2cyborg: basically, consciousness is epiphenomenal

Swampman: wow, I agree!

Vatbrain83: "Epiphenomenal"—what does that tell us???

2cyborg: fine: consciousness is just an evolutionary side effect. Consciousness does not affect the world.

ThunkChat, 5:42 PM

Becomingbeing: Maybe “consciousness” is an old outdated concept. Maybe we need a new concept, a new word. a new jargon.

2cyborg: hmmm

Vatbrain83: sigh. such as?

Becomingbeing: any suggestions?

Aether: can we compare “mind” and “soul” to “consciousness”?

2cyborg: I think so.

Swampman: hmmm. All that does is cause confusion and blatherskite.

Becomingbeing: did you just say blatherskite?

2cyborg: wait, are you telling me that we all agree that consciousness—or whatever we want to call it—can only be talked about when it is “doing something”?

Vatbrain83: consciousness not doing something is unconsciousness.

Swampman: so consciousness should always have a label? Action-consciousness. Sleep-consciousness.

Becomingbeing: blatherskite! I’m stealing that word.

Vatbrain83: hey, wait a minute. Slow down. This is confusing me. First we say that consciousness is “doing”, that consciousness is an act. Then we say that consciousness doesn’t matter, that it’s ineffectual anyway. Am I right so far?

2cyborg: I have no idea what consciousness is. But I feel like it is just an after-effect.

Vatbrain83: ok, my question, and I’m guessing that maybe for once bb and I will agree, is what about those neuroscientists who say that the brain is plastic? That we can consciously alter our brain?

Aether: when we talk about consciousness are we talking about subjectivity?

Becomingbeing: those are two different jargons. Whichever jargon you use tells us what discipline you come from. Same with “mind” or “soul.” The soul is damn blatherskite.

2cyborg: consciousness is damn blatherskite.

Swampman: subjectivity is blatherskite. And so is mind.

Vatbrain83: y’all a buncha damn blatherskites!

Becomingbeing: peace.

Refilling her water, looking through the fridge—grabs an apple, a knife.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 6:03 PM

Fiel's roommate, Tisha, got me thinking today. She was talking about going back to art school (she teaches high school art at Duke Ellington). So, yeah, it made me think of Ian.

Ian was an amazing artist.

Geometric— lines and grids, circles.

Repetition. City/country.

Ah, how do you describe an image anyway?

I don't really believe in mental illness.

No—strike that.

Ah, how do I word this?

First of all: the only person who can understand a mental illness is a person who has lived through that mental illness. By "understand," I mean completely-fully-lived-experience understand.

Of course, all mental illnesses are just arbitrary categories assigned by some medical association. Is there ever anyone who fits into one of these categories nicely and neatly?

Second: I will always hate any doctor who's first instinct is to prescribe something. You don't even know this person! Get to know them before you pump them full of pills!

That's what's most fascinating to me. They've never lived this experience, but they claim to know more about it than those who are living it right now. It would be like a Holocaust historian telling a Holocaust survivor what the Holocaust was about, what happened.

"I've talked to hundreds of survivors," they'd say, "so, trust me, I know more about this than you. Now take your medicine."

Sure—I realize where this logic is going: "Should all doctors have experienced what they are attempting to heal?" No, that's both impossible and impractical. But think about it this way: compare a doctor who has had a broken arm or who has had cancer healing either of those ailments to a doctor that has experienced neither; compare a female OBGYN with a male OBGYN.

With Ian, I always felt as if the doctors were talking at him, not listening. Like it was a fucking business meeting and he was the secretary.

Now take your medicine.

Ian contacts me every month or so, sometimes more.

Grabs, plays
a CD.

Song, 6:05
PM

Charles
Mingus

*The Black
Saint and the
Sinner Lady*

*Track A:
Solo Dancer*

6:11 PM
*Track B:
Duet-Solo
Dancers*

6:18 PM
*Track C
Group
Dancers*

<p>Blog, 6:24 PM</p> <p>Last time it was a box with a note and a rock. But mom, she just. Hmm. When I say “I don’t believe in mental illness,” it’s really difficult to explain exactly what I mean.</p> <p>That’s what I’m trying to get at here by using metaphors and analogies and all that. I go to the doctor and tell him that my brother is normal, he just has some things that don’t work sometimes. I can have normal conversations with my brother. Just not all the time. The doctor comes at it from the other side—Ian is “abnormal” with just a few things “normal” with him—he has “moments of lucidity.” So, it would seem like we are both talking about the same thing, but we’re not. And the way we each talk about it shapes our view of things, how we each view my brother. Of course, television shows don’t help. I’ve never once seen an accurate portrayal of someone like Ian or those others like him I met in the hospital on television. It’s always either some bawl-your-eyes-out bullshit sob story or a murderer claiming “mental defect” or some damn “triumphant” story of someone “overcoming the odds.” Films and television, they don’t know anything about nuance, subtlety—just heavy-handed slap-you-in-the-mouth bullshit. Now, writing this, I’m mad and hungry.</p>	<p>Song, 6:24 PM</p> <p><i>Medley Mode D: Trio and Group Dancers; Mode E: Single Solos; Mode F: Group and Solo Dance</i></p>
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Heels on the table.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs—the television.

A police procedural.

Carries her computer to her desk. Then walks to the kitchen, swallowing Excedrin.

Holds her forehead in her hand.

Rooting around the drawers and shelves of the refrigerator. Slamming the kitchen cabinets. Pulls out two cans of tuna fish. Brings out the cutting board. Washes and slices celery. Cuts onions red—then, looking at them, cuts them again, looking for the pepper, and cuts the end of her thumb.

“Aisssh,” she says.

Blood onto the floor and onions.

“Shit shit shit,” she says.

Grabbing a paper towel, bending over while holding her thumb.

“Fucking dumbass,” she says.

Throwing the red paper towel onto the floor and getting another.

“Idiot,” she says.

Then slowly brings herself level.

Walks to the bathroom, grabbing bandaids. She peeks under the paper towel and blood comes out. Peeling open the bandaid with one hand and her teeth—putting it on.

Back into the kitchen, she slowly grabs the onions and tosses them into the trash. Washes the cutting board, the knife, the counter.

Then, with one hand, begins again cutting the onion. Makes tuna fish with rice, sesame seeds, soy. Covers it and puts it into the back of the fridge.

Monday, June 8th

Few clouds, sunny, 60°

2:39 AM

Cracking rending the sky.

Waking Kyin from the couch.

The thunder slow—stomping—cracking—stomping—snapping the clouds in two.

She sits up— “Holy shit,” she says.

And walks to the window. Another stomp—crack—and a deluge drops onto the road.

“Wow.”

She grabs a chair, rolling it to the window, watching. Holding her throbbing thumb.

3:03 AM

The thunder dies down, the rain continuing. Carries her computer to the couch. To the kitchen grabbing water and tuna fish, seaweed.

Clicks a search engine, looking for mental health chatrooms.

Finds one and clicks it open.

4Humours, 3:09 AM *logged on as Energy*

Anima: Energy, welcome.

Kindheart: welcome, Energy.

Energy: hello. Can't sleep.

Antarctica: are you an insomniac, Energy?

Energy: no, not really. I just went to bed early and thunder woke me up. I was thinking about my brother. What are you all doing up?

Kindheart: I don't go to bed until late.

Antarctica: Kindheart is a doctor, Energy, be warned. I'm an insomniac. I used to hear voices at night, but not anymore.

Anima: please tell us about your brother, Energy.

Energy: nothing to tell, really.

Anima: that is fine. No pressure.

Kindheart: we were just talking about mental illness and exercise, Energy. In my research, and with my patients, I study how to deal with mental illness by looking at the body as a whole instead of just the brain or mind.

Energy: sounds like it makes sense.

Anima: I was wondering if you could be more specific, Kindheart.

Antarctica: here we go.

Kindheart: well, for instance, my colleague deals mostly with gerontology, with patients usually in their late 70s and older. most of his research now deals with video games. Most people over 70, actually, most people I know over 40, have a negative view of video games. But my colleague uses video games as a gateway. These games challenge the brain while exercising the body.

Balancing the bowl of tuna fish—picking it out with folded seaweed.

Holding out her thumb—typing with one hand.

Clicks on and mutes—CCs an infomercial.

Standing looking out the window.

A man is standing in the rain in a coat, holding

a leash holding a dog.

Across the hall, the sound of the door slamming, keys jangling.

Kyin switches off her light and returns to the window.

The man, now smoking, stands with his back to the building. His dog sniffing around the roots of a tree. She sees her neighbor exiting seeing the man with the dog—stopping—then quickly turning and returning.

Hearing her reentering the apartment—slamming the door.

4Humours, 3:36 AM

Energy: sorry. I thought I heard something outside.

Kindheart: exercise is actually very good for insomnia in most patients, Antarctica.

Anima: welcome back, Energy.

Antarctica: I exercise, I clean the entire house, I watch TV, I organize my bills, I just don't sleep. Sometimes I don't even want to sleep. But it really sucks when I see the sun coming up.

Energy: I have a question. When you heard voices, Antarctica, what did they say to you? That sounds really creepy to me.

Antarctica: it didn't happen that often, but, yes, it was creepy as hell. Just sometimes I would be sitting after I hadn't slept in a really long time. And it was always these three guys. And they would start saying shit to me, but usually I couldn't clearly hear what they were saying. Sometimes they'd just say, like if I was buttoning a shirt, they'd mumble, "No don't button that, that's stupid, but make sure you button it right you dumbass."

Energy: that would scare the shit outta me.

Antarctica: ha, yeah, well put. I like you—most people in here are so damn clinical, Energy. I hate that shit. Yeah, it was a long time ago, so I have a sense of humor about it now, but at the time it was very scary. Plus, I was just a teenager and I felt like if I told anyone they'd think I was crazy.

Energy: my brother never talked about hearing voices. I don't think he did hear them. I don't think he was crazy or "mentally ill." No offense, Kindheart, you really seem nice, and I think it's admirable that you take the time to come to chatrooms like this, but most mental health doctors I've met have disgusted me.

Kindheart: I'm sorry to hear that, Energy. To be honest, I'm young and new to the field. I wish your brother the best of luck. Was there anything in particular that made you dissatisfied with them?

Energy: disgusted, not dissatisfied. He wasn't a customer. I will say that treating the body as a whole instead of just "the mind" sounds like a good start. And it's commendable that you're visiting chatrooms like this. Anima what's your story?

Anima: my story?

Energy: yeah.

The rain
gradually
slowing.

Her
neighbor's
door
slamming.

Keys
jangling.

4Humours, 4:08 AM

Anima: The story is, a long time ago, I was raped, and now I am anorexic and I do not deal well with real world men.

Energy: wow. I'm sorry to hear that, Anima. You seem like a really nice person.

Anima: thank you. That is about all I can say about it.

Kindheart: do you mind if I ask you a question, Anima?

Anima: yes, I mind-sorry! if you are asking about exercise, I exercise all the time. I exercise too much. I cannot help it. I do not like to talk anymore about it, so sorry that is all!

Kindheart: ok. how about, one more question, what are you thinking about when you exercise?

Anima: I am not thinking about anything. that is to say, I am thinking about everything. But mostly I look at the time and think about the time and my pacing. Why, what should I think about?

Wolfman logs in

Anima: welcome, Wolfman. That is an interesting name!

Wolfman: I'm an interesting guy.

Energy: ha! Awesome.

Wolfman: yes, I am awesome.

Antarctica: dude, are you serious?

Kindheart: nice to meet you, Wolfman. What brings you here?

Wolfman: nothing brings me here. Just looking around.

Anima: no pressure, Wolfman.

Wolfman: I can handle pressure. You probably think it's sexy.

Energy: this guy is cracking me up.

Antarctica: how can we think you're sexy, exactly? Do we know you?

Wolfman: if you already love me, Anima, you sexy kitty, that's alright.

Energy: whoa, back it up Wolf, stay away from Anima, ok?

Anima: it is alright.

Wolfman: of course you love it.

Anima: no, I meant, it is alright, I can handle men like you. We are on your side, ok, Wolfman? You came here to talk, right?

Antarctica: you're not gonna get through to him, Anima. He's either a troll or narcissistic or both.

Kindheart: maybe let's change the subject. How about where is your brother now, Energy? Is he in a care facility?

Energy: my brother? No. he just sorta comes and goes.

4Humours, 4:41 AM

Kindheart: how does he support himself?

Energy: I'd rather not talk about that.

Kindheart: fair enough.

Antarctica: Kindheart, ok you mean well, but this is exactly what I mean by doctors—the kind of thing that bothers me. You're asking questions like it's an interrogation, like you have some preconceived notion of what her (I'm guessing you're a female, Energy? Something gave me that vibe) brother is like.

Wolfman: I got that vibe, too. you can have your turn, Energy, but Anima is first. Sorry Antarctica, you fail.

Kindheart: I'm just trying to get to the bottom of things.

Antarctica: exactly. You want an equation. [Problem + X =Solution] X= medication. That's how doctors think.

Kindheart: I really don't understand this dislike for doctors. Doctors are not out to get people. We only want to help, ok?

Antarctica: I know, we're all supposed to be friends here, right? Be careful—"out to get people," you almost sound as if you're trying to say that people who don't trust doctors are paranoid. I'm not paranoid if I have a valid argument for disliking a certain methodology.

Walking to the window, waiting, watching—sees her neighbor dropping a brown bag into the trash.

Quick Kyin puts on shoes and coat and takes the elevator down.

Flipping up her jacket's collar. Unbuttoning the umbrella.

Walking up to the glass door, she sees the same man—standing with his back to her, smoking, holding onto the dog's leash.

The dog looking up at her, briefly, then continuing sniffing.

Stopping to urinate.

Kyin backs away from the door, watching the cloud of smoke.

Then jogs back up to her apartment. Out of breath.

Looking out the window.

The man now gone.

The brown package soaked.

"Shit," she says.

Wiping the wet from her face, turning to look in the mirror— "What the fuck?" she asks.

Walks to the kitchen and grabs an energy drink, opening it as she turns the AC on low.
Returning to the window.

Then carries and plugs in the computer, resting the drink on the coffeetable.

Slowly walking down the hallway, the stairwell.

Out to the brown package and back up to her apartment.

Kyin gingerly opens the bag, pulling out the pages, spreading them out upon the table.

Bends close, examining the ink. Looks again out the window—a few bodies moving to cars. The early morning crowd.

5:54 AM

Cracked egg into a pan. Butter and bread.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:02 AM

Female Anchor: Authorities have now confirmed that they have found remains, but they still don't know the details of what exactly happened.

Male Anchor: Quite a tragedy. Coming up, some bad news for those of you who use the 14th Street Bridge to come to work.

Female Anchor: Yes, but it will be good news in the long run. Also, we've got weather. After this.

Carries her food to the couch.

Awkwardly holding her fork.

Mutes—CCs—the commercial.

6:27 AM

To the bathroom, slowly peeling off the layers of bandaids. Looks at the thumb—grimaces. Hot water on a paper towel, Kyin dabs at the dried blood.

Then touches the flap of skin—winces.

Carefully undressing and stepping into the shower.

7:04 AM

Out, drying. Small concentric circles brushing the teeth.

Dressed, clicking open her blog.

Blog, 7:14 AM

This is the kind of neighborhood where everyone has a dog or a baby. So I'm used to seeing that. So I have this one neighbor, a guy, who is always out in the morning, walking his dog and smoking. Fine. Nothing strange about that.

But today, for some reason, I got weirded out. He was there when Neighbor22 was making a file deposit, and then he was there again when I went down.

And then I started realizing that he often happens to be there when either I am there or she is there. The problem is—so what? Most people have a morning routine, right? I know—I can't work it out. For some reason it just disconcerts me that his routine sometimes coincides with ours. The 3 of us, interconnected. Note: today I skipped the treadmill. Not in the mood. Good news, though: I couldn't sleep last night (thunder), and I found what seems like a decent mental health chatroom. Nice people.

Checks her email.

Email Inbox, 7:26 AM

From: Tisha

Hey, Kyin, I was thinking that you know more about the philosophical aspects of art than I do. I was wondering if you could recommend any authors? I wanna prepare for grad school. I'm nervous! Also, Fiela said that your brother was an artist—do you have any of his work that I could see?

Thanks,

Tisha

Carrying her computer to the CD player, looking through the window—she again sees the man, now without his dog. He stands for a moment, digging in his pockets, then begins walking toward Duke Ellington Bridge.

Kyin throws on her shoes, packs her bag—runs out and down to the sidewalk.

Down 20th Street, sees him crossing Calvert, turning left onto the bridge. She walks on the left side, against the hooked suicide rails.

Down and down again into the Metro.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

The man reading a book.

She sits six seats behind him.

Doors closing, step back to allow the doors to close.

8:24 AM

The man stands at Bethesda, Kyin following.

Up and up and out. The sidewalks wet, the man walking fast.

She snapping pictures.

Then suddenly stopping, watching as he heads toward and enters a building brick and glass.

A few more photographs.

8:40 AM

Down riding the Metro returning, she makes a note. The train clunking and chunking.

No room for standing.

She closes her lids, leaning against the window.

The man sitting next to her clears his throat and blows his nose. Kyin looks at him, closing her notebook.

Notebook, 8:40 AM

Neighbor 44—to a building. One of those “Bethesda buildings” (normal looking building with high security). I saw him flash an ID badge. I’m assuming he works there, but I couldn’t get in without ID or anything. I’d have to come up with something, but then what would I do even if I gained access?

Getting his name would help.

In the window’s reflection, she sees a woman standing holding the metal pole looking at herself, adjusting her hair. Behind the woman, a man is staring at her backside.

At each stop, more people crowd into the tiny space.

9:07 AM

At Chinatown, Kyin switches lines—onto the Green.

Down to the Navy Yard. Up and out.

9:33 AM

A quick order of coffee black, she begins walking toward the water, down 1st Street.

Over and onto the Frederick Douglass Bridge—cars packed back to back. Stops, leaning looking over the river.

In the distance—Anacostia.

Honked horns, helicopters.

A slight breeze amidst the humidity.

12:44 PM

Home—sleeps.

3:17 PM

Limbs languid to the AC.

To water cold. To her desk, the computer.

Browsing the internet. Bookstores and newspapers. Course websites and jobsites.

4:37 PM

Stretches, walking to the window.

6:26 PM

Coming up Mount Pleasant, sliding into *Adams Express*.

“Anyounghaseyo!”

The grandmother smiling. Taking Kyin’s order—kimbap and soondubu.

She waits at the small counter, looking out on the avenue.

A sixty-something Latina woman pushing a cart full of toilet paper and grapefruit.

Two twenty-something White men pointing at something on the sidewalk.

6:40 PM

The food comes, steam rising. The grandmother and grandfather smiling.

She eats looking out. Warm food in the stomach.

7:47 PM

Home, drinking water. Making coffee.

Clicks on and mutes—CCs the television.

Clicks open chat.

ThunkChat, 7:55 PM

LanGame: wakka wakka.

Becomingbeing: huh?

Vatbrain83: hey bb. We’re just bullshitting—nobody’s here.

Becomingbeing: “bullshitting-“—oh, you mean philosophizing?

3monads: ouch. Do you really believe that?

Becomingbeing: believe what? that all philosophical discourse is just people bullshitting? No, not in so many words.

Vatbrain83: then in how many words.

Becomingbeing: a few more.

Vatbrain83: hmm.

ThunkChat, 8:12 PM

Becomingbeing: alright: how much philosophical thought would exist without jargonizing? Hold on—gotta go.

On the news,
reports of a
shooting.

Kyin clicks up the volume.

News, 8:16 PM

Female Anchor: Jess Simmons is there on the scene. Jess?

Jess: Thanks, Molly. We're just getting reports of a shooting here in the Trinidad neighborhood. Not much is clear yet, but we do know that the shooting involved one or several police officers.

Female Anchor: When do you think we'll know more, Jess?

Jess: Well, it's a little unclear right now, but the Chief of Police is expected on the scene before the bottom of the hour, so we'll try to get in a word with her.

Female Anchor: Thanks Jess. As you may remember, in the past, the Trinidad neighborhood was rocked by a series of shootings over a short period of time—7 people shot in nine hours.

Female anchor: This led to a controversial measure taken by the DC Police Department of setting up a series of checkpoints, with patrol cars checking each resident's identification, a measure that was challenged by the ACLU. DC police shut down the checkpoints, but then reopened them after another series of shootings claimed a child's life.

Male anchor: Let's hope that this shooting is not the sign of another dangerous summer for that neighborhood.

Quick packing her things, dressing.

Into the kitchen, turning off the coffee machine.

Climbing up to Connecticut, waving for a cab—not seeing any until she hits the hotels. At the Hilton, a brown sedan pulling up and letting her in.

"Florida and Bladensburg."

"Ok."

The man looks at her, turns left onto Florida.

"Can you hear me?" he asks.

"What—of course I can," she says.

"Oh," he smiles, "I thought maybe you were Gallaudet."

"Maybe I was what?"

He raises his voice. "Gall-you-det!"

Then lowers his voice. "You know," he says, whispers, "Are you deaf?"

"No," she says, shaking her head.

They continue driving. He looks in the mirror, inquisitive. Shrugs.

8:53 PM

Lights flicker blue and red—sirens—the hot night air humid.

He drops her off, takes cash.

Kyin begins walking, heading toward the flashing lights. Police cars and a gathering crowd. Helicopters. She stands, watching, slowly moving into the crowd.

Continues along the outer edge, moving closer to the police cars, the news vans.

Surreptitious photographs blinking among the lights.

The helicopter loud—then fading. Then again loud.

The heat hot, humid.

A female TV-reporter is talking to a group of police officers, trying to get them to agree to an interview—she eventually gives up, walking back to the van. Kyin follows the officers—listens, turns on her recorder.

"No—what, no just do your best to break them up."

"If we act like we're trying to start something, then something will be started."

"Just stand here and wait a bit—just wait it out. They'll all go home soon enough."

They move further away, behind the barrier. Kyin walks up to the reporter—takes a photograph.

"Do they have a name?"

The woman looking at Kyin. "Do you live here, miss?"

"Yes. Do they have a name?"

"The victim's name has not yet been released—miss did you see anything?"

"No. I meant, do they have a name for the officer involved in the shooting?"

"Oh—Officer—miss, I think you should go home, the police will—"

"Officer what?"

The female news reporter standing—looking full at Kyin.

"I'm sure there will be an investigation, miss. The officer will have to take a leave of absence, and—"

"Officer what?"

The reporter relenting.

"Patrick Walker is his name. And there will be a full investi—"

"Thank you," says Kyin.

Turning and walking back to the crowd.

10:37 PM

Kyin walks across Florida, down H Street, past restaurants and bars.

Loud nightclub crowd—laughing, drinking.

Finds a cab.

11:51 PM

To the fridge, a glass of water.

Turning on the AC.

To her computer. Types in an address search—"Walker, Patrick"—finds the address, "71632 Old Water Road, Germantown, MD."

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 12:04 AM

Shooting in Trinidad.

Officer Patrick Walker. 71632 Old Water Road Germantown, MD.

Actually, that's probably not that far from mom. I'll go there tomorrow and check in on her and him.

I didn't get many details tonight, just that a teenager was shot. It seems that the teenager (I don't know his name yet) had a gun, but it's not clear if he was carrying it when he was shot. Either way, he was shot in the back.

Interviewed a reporter and a few people standing about.

People in that neighborhood are always pretty angry with the police, so it's really hard for me not to take what they say with a grain of salt. Also, here is a picture of the TV-reporter that was there.

But this is a neighborhood where, especially if you're a young man, it's dangerous to be out at night. So he had a gun with him. But, if you're not a young man, seeing a young man with a gun is scary.

But fuck the social commentary.

1: A young man's been shot, killed by a cop.

This is a fact made difficult by, among others things,

2: The fact that no matter how many people get shot by cops in this city, none of those cops seem to ever be punished. A bad situation that only seems to get worse.

For some reason, I took the metro down to the Navy Yard today. Just following my gut, I guessed. Switched lines on the metro, jumped off. Went walking around, toward the water. Stopped on a bridge. Doing construction down there.

It's weird that the area across that bridge, that river, is still a part of this same city. I know nothing about what goes on over there.

Closes and turns off her computer.
Brushes, washes, undresses—climbs into bed.

Tuesday, June 9th

Rain, humid, 75°

6:34 AM

“Fuck!” Kyin jumps runs to look out the window. Sees the brown bag in the trash.

Fast dresses— “Aissh,” she hisses.

Down to the trash—the sidewalk empty.

Grabs the bag, a newspaper—runs into a White woman exiting the building, dressed in jogging clothes.

“Excuse me!”

“Oh—sorry.”

Back up to her apartment, banging the door closed.

Slowly taking off her shoes. Tossing the bag onto the coffee table.

Turning on the AC.

To the kitchen with eyes half-closed.

Making coffee.

Two eggs into water cold.

She turns the burner on high.

6:49 AM

Into the shower.

7:05 AM

Out of the shower, drying, pouring a mug of coffee.

Drinking, dressing, packing.

Looking at the mirror— “Did I forget anything?”

Out the door and up to the Metro.

Down, down, down.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

The train nearly empty.

Song, 7:17 AM
J.S. Bach
Partita no.1 in B Flat
Praeludium
Allemande
Corrente
Sarabande
Menuet I&II
Giga

Glenn Gould

Turns on the music in her ears—pulls open a book—yet closes her lids, leans against the window.

Tracks clunking her to sleep soft.

7:29 AM

Chthonic Metro coming out of the earth, bright light waking Kyin. A few more passengers, spaced sparsely.

Suburban landscape blurring by.

Square glass buildings parking lots concrete cars.

She looks down at her book yet open, a small spot wet of drool. Wipes her mouth, looking around at the other passengers.

Reads.

The train stopping at
Rockville Center.

Yi-Fu Tuan

Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience

Pages 60, 61

Crowding is an awareness that one is observed. In a small town, people 'watch out' for one another. 'Watch out' has both the desirable sense of caring and the undesirable one of idle—and perhaps malicious—curiosity. Houses have eyes.

The train stopping at Shady Grove.

8:25 AM

Driving down Old Water Road, looking at house numbers. Into a development—she parks against the curb. Begins taking photographs: the small yard, the car, the front door—through the windows. After some thirty pictures snapped, she returns to the car—sits and waits.

10:10 AM

A man exits the house—turns and says something, then closes the door.

Gets into his car.

Kyin behind, following him out of the development. He stops at a gas station—fills his tank, walks inside.

Kyin sits in her car, watching the man chatting with the cashier, leaning over the counter.

10:27 AM

The man exits the gas station—turns and says something to the cashier, then walks to and enters his car. Kyin following him onto 270 Northbound. Quickly up to 75-mph.

As the lanes narrow to two, Kyin falls back, allowing cars to pass.

Past Urbana, Frederick.

Into Pennsylvania.

11:19 AM

At Gettysburg, he exits onto Route 30. Turns left.

Past Sheetz and Walmart, on into town. As he slows, Kyin allows more and more cars to pull out, coming in-between.

Through the circle, he brakes then parks. Walks across the street, into the *Lincoln Diner*.

Kyin looks for a space, then finds an alley next to the restaurant, pulls around back, parking in the lot.

She walks in. A Deco railcar diner—stools and counter on the left, booths on the right.

She sees the man in the rearmost booth, facing her, talking to another man—Kyin seeing only the back of the second man's head. She sits quickly.

The waitress a young girl laying a menu upon the table.

"Hello," she says—pulling a straw out of her apron and straightening the placemat, the fork and knife.

"Hi," says Kyin, smiling.

"What can I get you to drink?"

"Oh—uh, just a water with lemon, please."

The smiling waitress. "Sure thing."

Kyin looks out the window—sees train tracks and an empty lot. Cars bump over the tracks, coming and going.

She takes out her notebook, her pen. Takes off her glasses and puts them into a case. Rubbing her nose.

"Here you are," the waitress bring the water, placing it onto a napkin.

"You ready to order?"

"Oh—yes, it says you have breakfast all day?"

The waitress nods and smiles. "Yep, all day," she says. Then takes out her pad, her pencil.

"I'll just have an onion and cheese omelet with wheat toast."

"Alright, that everything?"

"Yes."

The waitress leaning over and taking the menu. "Ok, it'll be right out."

11:56 AM

The waitress comes, bringing Kyin's order.

"Here you are, ma'am. Anything else I can get for you?"

"No, thank you. This looks great."

"Alright, great," she says, she smiles.

Kyin continues watching the booth at the end—seeing the man with his back to her stand, walking downstairs, below the **RESTROOMS** sign. A family enters, sitting in-between, blocking Kyin's view of the men.

She finishes fast her food—signals the waitress.

12:15 PM

Kyin pulls around, facing the man's parked car—puts on her glasses, pulls out her camera.

12:26 PM

The man exits with the other man. They stand talking—then shake hands. The first man moving to his car, the other walking toward the circle. She snaps pictures.

1:07 PM

Driving back through Frederick, Kyin quits following the man, exiting and pulling into a gas station. Fills her tank. In the parking lot she takes notes.

Glancing up occasionally to see men with refillable coffee mugs coming from pickup trucks.

Kyin walks in
and browses,
buys a water
and beefjerky.
Drives to her
mother's
house.

Notepad, 1:19 PM

Went to 71632 Old Water Road. Typical suburban development, not unlike the one Mom and I used to live in.

Followed the man, who I'm assuming is Patrick Walker. After filling his tank, he drove a fast straight line straight to a diner in Gettysburg, meeting with another man. Obviously a prearranged meeting. The two men actually looked alike, the one man older. Maybe his father?

However, I never got a great look at the other man, nor could I hear his voice. A combination of being worried I'd be seen and there were some loud customers in the place. Which was actually good, because they made me feel invisible.

Gettysburg is a nice old town. Mom took me there when I was a kid. The two men split up after lunch, and I let Walker go at Frederick, because I needed to refuel. Figure I'll spend the night with Mom and check up on him again tomorrow.

Wednesday, June 10th

Cloudy, 69°

6:50 AM

Coming down the stairs, into the kitchen, Kyin finds a plate of eggs hardboiled covered in plastic—on top, a note.

Note, 6:52 AM

Kyin,

There is fresh rice and ggog tang in the pot (fresh crabs!).

You can heat it up.

Make sure you eat it all and drink enough water.

She heats the food. Turns on the television while eating.

News, 7:03 AM

Female Anchor: For more on that shooting last night in the Trinidad neighborhood we go now to Jess Simmons.

Jess Simmons: The suspect, Kalon Woods, was carrying a gun [cut to photograph of a young man]. DC police received a call reporting suspicious activity of a man brandishing a gun [cut to images of police cruisers]. Park Police, assisting DC Police, approached Woods and Woods fled. Shots were fired. [cut to the police Chief standing behind a podium in front of microphones]: “What happened here last night was a tragedy. We want the members of this community to know that we are here to serve them.” Police have made sure to let the public know that a full investigation is being conducted and that the officer involved has been placed on administrative leave. Back to you, Molly.

Female Anchor: Thanks, Jess. That’s quite a tragedy. Up next, are we ever gonna get rid of those thundershowers?

7:47 AM

Dressed and packed, she leaves a note.

Note, 7:47 AM

Mom,

The food was very comforting in my belly.

Thanks for the car.

Call,

Kyin

11:00 AM

Home—pulling off her shoes. Carrying her computer to the coffeetable.

Grabbing a glass of water, turning on the AC.

Searches online for any news on the shooting—finds nothing.

Searches—“DC Police and FBI relationship.”

Scans the various pages.

Searches—“Robert Thompson and DC.”

“Patrick Walker and Robert Thompson.”

“Patrick Walker and Cote d’Ivoire.”

Finds nothing.

“DC police and black victims.”

“DC police and white victims.”

“DC police shooting deaths.”

Reads through various articles, police blotter reports.

1:22 PM

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 1:22 PM

If someone is determined enough to find something, eventually, if they cannot find that thing, they will instead create it. I don't want to find something; I just want to look. For any event, there are as many versions/perspectives as there are individuals present—*Rashomon*, etc. There are also, however, as many versions/perspectives as there are institutions/organizations present. Or, I guess I could use the term, “social groups.” For each social group there is a jargonization, a way of putting things into their language. A jargonization “explains” by erasing. A sociologist “explains” what people “think” they are doing, by putting those acts into jargons. A Politician “represents” citizens. But, really, what that sociologist and politician are doing, by jargonizing, is translating—erasing.

All jargonization is erasure.

For each social group, there is a way of seeing things influenced by this jargonization. DC cops have a way of speaking and seeing that is completely different from both DC citizens and the FBI.

But no individual remains wholly within one social group. We each move in and out of various groups—some of which we may never return to, some of which may alter our lives forever. For one person, being on their high school basketball team may be an experience they may never forget. While the next person may only be influenced by the social groups of the present.

The point I'm trying to make is that each of these groups jargonize. And each of these jargonizations overlap and combine within us.

Trying to get behind jargonizations to the actual event—to what happened—is not only frustrating, but also impossible. Newspaper reporters jargonize. Cops jargonize.

Lawyers jargonize. Philosophers jargonize. Doctors jargonize. Codes and codes and codes. Cryptographers, all.

1:52 PM

To the fridge, looking through the drawers, the freezer. Finds an apple, cheese, yogurt.

Grabs a knife and spoon, crackers. Back to the computer.

Clicks open chat.

4Humours, 2:00 PM

Anima: Welcome, Energy. Good to see you.

Energy: Hey, Anima. Call me Choi, ok? You hang out here alot?

Anima: Yeah. I'm a college student. This place is my home.

Energy: I get it.

Blue17: Hello, Energy. Are you depressed?

Energy: Nope. How are you, Blue?

Blue17: I'm fine.

Darger: No you're not, Blue.

Anima: anything on your mind, Choi?

Energy: Not really. Just dropping by. I was thinking about memory, though.

Anima: A memory? Or memories?

Energy: both, I guess.

Darger: like repressed memories? You believe in that crap?

Energy: no, no. not "repressed," that's a jargon. I was just thinking about memories, that's all. Why do we remember some things but forget others? Why do we remember stupid little things but sometimes forget important things? Why do different people have different memories of the same event? Just all these old questions—for some reason, I've been thinking about it alot today.

Anima: some things you don't want to remember.

Energy: exactly. Some things you can make yourself forget (but, then, how would you know that you made yourself forget if you forgot?) but others you can't.

Blue17: if you don't want to forget then just write it down. Make a list.

Energy: that's a good point. Writing, photography, video—they help to store memories. Techno-memories.

Anima: Do you want to forget something, Choi?

Energy: Oh, well. I dunno. It's not that, really. I dunno what I'm talking about this for.

Anima: No, I'm glad you brought it up. Itis interesting.

Darger: If you don't want to talk about it, you don't want to talk about it. But if you won't talk about it with us, then who?

Anima: No pressure, Darger. Change the subject.

Blue17: Me. I'm feeling depressed.

Anima: Why are you depressed, Blue?

Blue17: I just am.

4Humours, 2:31 PM

Energy: You want to talk about it?

Blue17: It's my mom.

Energy: What about your mom? Is she alright?

Blue17: No, she's a bitch.

Anima: Why do you say that?

Darger: how old are you?

Blue17: I like a boy. She's just such a bitch. She tries to make me not see him. Like she can stop me!

Energy: Did you do something? What happened?

Blue17: Nothing. I just she was coming yelling at me, so I grabbed a big kitchen knife and was threatening to kill myself. So she made a big deal out of it and made me see a doctor.

Darger: It sounds like a very sad tale. I'll be right back, I gotta go get some Kleenex.

Blue17: It is sad, ok! You think I'm stupid.

Anima: Of course we don't think you're stupid, Blue. So are you seeing a psychologist now?

Blue17: My mom says he's a therapist. He just sits there and listens to me. He's my mom's age.

Darger: Sigh. Sorry, running out of patience. If you have a therapist, why did you come in here, Blue? Don't you like your therapist?

Blue17: No, I just think it's stupid. All I do is talk and all he does is listen. Then we leave and my mom shows off her chest and he stares at her tits and she gives his secretary a check.

Energy: Do you feel like killing yourself anymore?

Blue17: I never felt like killing myself! That's only for crazy people! I just said that to make that bitch mad because she wouldn't let me go see Brian.

Energy: Ok, I see. Well, Darger, I see what you mean.

Darger: She had you going for a while, huh?

Blue17: What the hell are you talking about!

Anima: Is there anything else you would like to talk about, Blue?

Blue17: I'M DEPRESSED, OK!

Anima: Yes, we understand.

Blue17: FORGET IT!

Blue17 logs off

Energy: Sigh.

Darger: Collective sigh.

Anima: You two make me laugh.

Energy: I feel so damn old now.

4Humours, 2:52 PM

Darger: I'll say one thing for her, she made me forget about my problems for a while.

Anima: Well, I'm sorry, but I have a test tomorrow. I have to get ready. I hope to see you again!

Energy: Ok, bye, sweetie.

Darger: Bye.

Anima logs off

Energy: So why are you here, Darger?

Darger: The usual boring crap.

Energy: Which is?

Darger: Some suicide attempts. Blah blah.

Energy: You don't like to talk about it.

Darger: I could care less. It's stupid.

Energy: Well, I hate it when people ask me leading questions, so I'll just talk about something else. How about, do you like sports?

Darger: What a random question.

Energy: Yeah, that was the point. Fine, then, no questions—declarations. I like swimming. Strike that—I love swimming. I was on the swim team in high school and college.

Darger: Were you good?

Energy: Pretty damn good! Ha, it's funny how you can brag about things in the past without feeling boastful. Yeah, I was good. Not anymore, though.

Darger: Did you win anything?

Energy: Yep. I won some.

Darger: I gotta be honest. I just hate talking about depression and suicide and all that. It's just really damn boring to me. But then, I come in here, so of course I'm asking for it. I feel like I need something to give my life purpose. Ok, so what's your deal?

Energy: My deal is my brother. I'm pretty new to this site. I just have been worrying more and more about him, so I guess that's why I came here.

Darger: Oh, so you're normal. Just an observer.

Energy: I wouldn't put things that way.

Darger logs off

Carrying her computer as she shuts off the AC, grabs a glass of water.

Then plugging in her laptop, clicking open her email.

The sounds of birds and construction workers.
A truck beeping backing up.

Grabs her camera from her bag, transferring
the photographs to her computer. She sorts
through the various images.

“Come on,” she says.

Finds images of Patrick Walker.

Images of *Neighbor 44* walking his dog.

The crime scene, the crowd.

The newspaper reporter.

Various police officers.

To the CD album—flipping through, selecting, playing.

Patrick Walker exiting his house.

Kyin zooms in, refines.

Inside the house is a woman sitting on a couch, her mouth open—
she looks to be yelling.

Pictures of the Metro.

Of Fiela.

Of her mother.

Patrick Walker and the man, shaking hands outside of the *Lincoln Diner*.

Several photographs.

Kyin expands the frame on the man—taller than Patrick Walker,
White, gray hair. The man wearing a white button-up, jeans.

Sixty-something.

A few photographs of the man walking toward Gettysburg Circle.

Zooms in again on his face.

Copy and pastes photographs.

The crime scene.

Patrick Walker.

The man.

Neighbor 44.

Email Outbox, 3:21 PM

To: Tisha

Tisha,

Hey,

I’m an idiot when it comes to talking
about Art.

If you want, though, we can go to a
bookstore and look at art magazines
together.

Kyin

Song, 3:43 PM

Gustav Mahler

Symphony no. 9

Movement 1:

Andante Comodo

Movement 2:

Im Tempo eine

Gemächlichen

Ländler. Etwas

täppisch und sehr

derb—Poco più

mosso subito—

Ländler, ganz

langsam

Pierre Boulez

Chicago

Symphony

Orchestra

"I don't know you—do I?" asks Kyin.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 4:32 PM

I'm copying and pasting photographs here of Patrick Walker and the man he met up with, as well as my dog-walking Bethesda neighbor. Something about the "man," I guess I'll have to make up a name—Darger—something about "Darger" seems familiar. But I have a feeling that that feeling of familiarity is just something I'm making up. Something that I want to be there, so I'm putting it there when it isn't really there. Maybe he's just related to Patrick Walker. Maybe he really is his father or uncle.

I am not determined to find something.

I am just looking.

I just followed Walker on an impulse, and I think it ended up being a good idea. I'm guessing that he is from the country, moved to the suburbs, now works as a cop in the city.

Song, 5:05 PM

Movement 3:

Rondo

Burlesque—

Allegro Assai—

Sehr trotzig--

Presto

Movement 4:

Adagio—sehr

langsam

Closes the various boxes, moves away from the desk.

Comes across the brown bag on the coffee table. Opens it—pulling out and opening the brown envelope.

Looks through the various pages.

Returns to and clicks open her blog.

Blog, 5:05 PM

I just realized that I've never really transcribed any of Neighbor 22's writings. When I first saw these I didn't know what to think. Well, I still don't know what to think, but back then they freaked me out. Now, when I see them they're kind of comforting. I don't have the code for these writings (if there is one), but I yet feel as if I understand them.

Below is a word-for-word transcription from about a third of one of the pages (I'll have to scan a full page later, but this'll do for now).

Lays the papers on the desk, beside the computer.

Blog, 5:25 PM

$23x + 23y; \sin 2x - 3$. That is a cat is a cat is a cat is a cat is a cat is a gat is a cat attack. Xminer's are 5y ELEVEN. To begin. The Energy runs green and blue. But $72\cos X$ is much more important. Because of that, so keep that in mind. $X-4=\log_3 x$. But don't believe in that. I'm yesterday not Y?

Which is, 33# plus an insufferable beetle box. Energy runs green and blue. I've been saying that all along. $4Y-2\cos x$ is the equivalent. I think you're a reasonable woman bleh.

IN the long run, that's $x7x7x7x7x7x7x7x7x$. Fingers becomes sleepings suns. Oh, I see.

Yes, you make 5%, so carry on. In the beginning. Sum it up. 89 climbing onto a dinwo. $4x5x2$. Energy runs green and blue.

That's all I can write right now, it kinda hurts my eyes. That above was only a little selection out of what is usually between 3 and 5 typed pages each morning.

Pulls out a pen from a drawer, writing the date on the folder. Sliding the pages into the folder, then

carrying it to and placing it into her bookcase.

"I need a filing cabinet," she says.

Into the kitchen, looking at the clock. Then walking back to the living room.

Dresses, grabs her bag, exits.

5:50 PM

On Columbia, stops at an ATM—checks her balance, withdrawing forty dollars.

Steps into *So's Your Mom*. A small line, Kyin moving to order.

"Could I have whitefish on an onion bagel?"

The ajumma smiling, nodding.

"Ne," she says.

Smiling Kyin.

5:57 PM

Carrying the brown bag to Kalorama Park. Finds an empty bench.

Coming up the hill, a father and son. The boy talking, gesturing, the father looking down, swinging a bookbag.

The squeak of rusty swings. Dogs and sticks.

Two White women, each pushing a stroller.

Chewy bagel, toasted.

6:50 PM

On her way home, makes a call.

Keying into her building.

Checking the mail.

Cell, 6:50 PM

Mom: Hello?

Kyin: Mom, did you get my message?

Mom: Oh, yes.

Kyin: I'll call you this weekend, ok?

Mom: Ok, goodnight.

Into the elevator. Down the hall.

“‘Goodnight’? She must be tired.”

Hears footsteps and turns, sees her neighbor smiling.

“Oh—hi,” says Kyin. “I guess I was talking to myself, wasn’t I?”

The neighbor—*Neighbor 22*—smiling fiddling with her keys.

“I do it all the time,” she says.

Then, “I’m sorry—I’ve forgotten your name.”

“Kyin—what’s yours again?”

“Cate.” A wide smile.

Smiling Kyin.

Cate opening her door. “Be seeing you,” she says.

Nodding Kyin.

They each entering through their respective doors.

Kyin carrying her trash to the kitchen.

Looking at the mirror, her eyes.

Friday, June 19th

Cloudy and humid, 83°

6:42 PM

Kyin and Tisha walking into *The Newsroom*. Kyin ordering coffee black.

They head to the racks in the back—past cars, models with scintillating skin cooing, animals, homes, tabloids.

Grabbing Art magazines.

Kyin flipping through the glossy pages. "So, have they got back to you yet?"

"This secretary there is really nice, she emails me back—see" —she points to an essay, Kyin looking over— "this is what I'm talking about. At my undergrad, Modernism is as far as I went, so when I see an essay like this, obviously I can figure out what they mean, but really I feel clueless, like I've been out of it."

"Don't ask me—jargons."

Tisha turning the page.

"Hey," says pointing Kyin, "that's the style that Ian likes. His work is kinda like that, except not as bare bones. Instead of a few lines and squares, he has millions—it's like a landscape of geometry. I can show you one of them— I have it at home."

Tisha stares.

"I kinda like it," she says.

7:45 PM

They purchase several magazines, begin walking up Connecticut with brown bags.

Cracking thunder.

Jogging up the hill, past green *George McClellan* bronzed gazing southward astraddle.

Into the building, the elevator, the apartment.

Kyin turning on the AC.

"Whoa—" Tisha walking to the painting covering the whole of the wall.

"What?" asks Kyin, turning, "Oh," she says.

"Is that it? Your brother's?"

"Yep," says Kyin—biting her cheek.

"How'd you even get it in here?"

"Oh—Ian did it by himself. He's really particular about that kinda stuff—he had it broken down, then he just reassembled it."

Cracking—stomping—cracking.

"Isn't it dizzying in this small space?"

"At first it was, yeah—but that's how he wanted it, anyway. I'm used to it now, though—it's sort of invaded my consciousness."

"Does he live around here?"

"Not too far. I see him maybe once a month or so."

"Does he make a living doing this?"

Kyin walking to the kitchen, "Oh, no—you want something to drink?"

"No, thanks."

Coming out of the kitchen with beer cold.

Tisha standing at the bookcase. "What's with all these folders with dates?"

Seeing Kyin—turning, asking, "Oh, you drink beer?"

"Huh? Yeah, why not? Those are just case files—boring stuff."

Kyin sitting on the couch, pulling out a magazine. The beer on the table.

Cracking—stomping.

Tisha at the window. "This seems like a nice neighborhood."

"It's quiet."

"That's a good thing—ours is pretty loud nonstop."

Tisha walking around the apartment, looking.

Books, music, films, a desk—computer, notebooks, a camera, pens.

A bed—quilt, pillows.

A dresser—a clock, pens, a candle, a change jar.

The bathroom—blue shag bathmat, a framed photograph above the toilet.

The sink—toothbrush, soap, mascara, lipstick, fingernail polish.

The kitchen—pottery, an old refrigerator, dishwasher, stove. A clock.

A mirror.

9:17 PM

The two on the couch, talking, drinking.

"That damn tan!" yells Kyin.

Tisha laughing. "Right? I told her, I said, you'll never be as Black as me, ok? I don't care how much you go to those tanning salons."

Kyin shaking her head, drinking. "It's like a damn addiction," she says.

The thunder turned to rain.

"I mean, tanning salons—huh? I didn't know people still went to those places."

"Oh, they do, trust me. Fiela probably keeps them in business by herself."

Kyin standing, "You want another?"

Tisha nodding as Kyin walks into the kitchen.

"God, I haven't had beer in a long time. I feel like I want to burp like a whale."

Kyin coming back. "A whale?"

"I dunno—I just imagine whales burping really loud. Like, massive burps."

10:44 PM

Tisha holding a beer, standing in front of the painting.

Kyin comes out of the bathroom—sees Tisha at the painting—bites the inside of her cheek.

“This is really—when you get up close, you can see—” turning to Kyin—“does he outline this first? How does he plan this?”

Kyin into the kitchen, staring at the last beer.

“No. Something—he must spend hours just planning this, right?”

From the kitchen—“Ah, I’m not hungry. I’m kinda tired.”

“What? Oh, me too. I can catch a cab.”

“No, no,” says Kyin. “Why don’t you just stay on the couch?”

Coming out of the kitchen.

Tisha with shiny eyes, shrugging. “Why not?” she says.

11:02 PM

From her bed, Kyin hears sounds. Stands and looks over at Tisha—snoring.

Out the window—rain.

Tisha’s purse, sitting open. Kyin looking leaning digging into the purse—wallet, makeup, pad, pen. Opening the wallet, reading the notepad.

Then replacing the items, sliding back to sleep.

Saturday, June 20th

Sunny, clear, 80°

6:02 AM

Silent Kyin making coffee.

The sound of birds and dogs.

To the computer, clicking open chat.

ThunkChat, 6:11 AM

Vatbrain83: That's an oversimplification.

Swampman: Well, clarify, then.

Vatbrain83: That's just one of the problems with a format like this, with chatrooms. It's hard to develop a thought, to really get to the meat of something.

Becomingbeing: So you can only get to the meat in what, a book? A journal article? What is the appropriate length?

Vatbrain83: Don't get me wrong, I think chatroom discussions have their value. It's just that some arguments can only be resolved in a longer format.

Swampman: To me the great thing about it is that we are all thinking collaboratively. A book is one person becoming locked into one mode of thought. In a chatroom, we are all together working towards something.

Becomingbeing: What were you two working towards this morning?

Vatbrain83: Morning? More like lunch time.

Swampman: We were going over that age old boring question of "representation and reality."

Becomingbeing: Ok—you mean, "The Mind Can Never Know The Really Real Reality," or TMCNKTRRR, right? I'll say first off that my main problem with TMCNKTRRR is that it leaves out the body. Can't the body know the RRR? Think about someone throwing a baseball. They don't have to think about the physics of throwing. Their body just knows how to throw the ball. In fact, I would say that those who don't think about it, who just do it, are probably better at throwing than those that let thinking get in the way.

Vatbrain83: We've got some meat and bones there, BB.

Swampman: One of the problems is the term "reality." Sometimes "reality" means "everything" or "truth," but sometimes it just refers to the thing we happen to be perceiving at the moment.

Becomingbeing: I couldn't agree more! Jargonizing. These two jargons cause confusion. So, the question, "Can we know reality?" has a number of translations: "Can we know this object we are perceiving at this moment?" "Can I perceive this chicken with my senses? Or do my senses block me from the true chicken, the complete chicken?" (I can't see the backside) "Can we ever know everything? The truth of life?" All of these questions overlap. But, still, I would hold that most of these questions end up referring to what the mind knows—ignoring the body. Of course we know the chicken, we just can't see it from all angles at the same time. All I have to do is walk around the counter—then I see all of the chicken.

Coffee
gurgling.

A
lawnmower
close by.

Kyin to the
kitchen,
pouring into
a red mug.

Tisha
mumbles
something,
then rolls
onto her
side.

Sun coming
through the
window, a
square of
light on the
floor.

ThunkChat, 6:35 AM

Becomingbeing: Can a baseball batter know if he is truly perceiving the ball coming towards him? Of course he knows—how else would he be able to hit a home run? Doing is knowing.

Swampman: “Perception and reality” is a question people use for every situation. “Can we know the true reality of what just happened?” Can we know the truth of what that politician is saying? So many people make a living off political commentary. “What did her speech actually mean?” Can we know the truth of 9/11? Can we know the truth of Global Warming? Can we know the truth of what the Mass Media is telling us?

Becomingbeing: Where I live I’m surrounded by those political commentators. “9/11” and “Global warming” are jargons—they cause us to think that, for example, “Global Warming” is just one event, one thing—and that that one thing either is or is not occurring. The code “9/11” allows people to take an inexplicable event and codify it—“Oh,” they say, “9/11 was a tragedy,” “9/11 was caused by KSM and OBL”—it’s only by putting the event into the coded language of “9/11” that they are able to let their mind skip over the details. The no longer refer to the event—they refer to the jargon. Nine eleven.

Vatbrain83: I feel like we’re not getting anywhere. We’re just expanding our 1 question into, what, 100 questions?

Swampman: Fair enough. For this chatroom argument, let’s narrow it down. Any suggestions?

Becomingbeing: Ok, narrow it down—I’ve been thinking alot about memory recently. The memory of an event. The mediated memory of an event. Mediated through other people (how other people remember what happened) and mediated through media (photographs, recordings, videos).

Vatbrain83: Ahhhhhh too many questions! This isn’t a book!

Becomingbeing: See, sometimes I think the main reason people have different beliefs is because they have different methodologies. You and I, VB, we have fundamentally different methodologies. I believe in forming more questions. In jargon smashing. In nuance. Asking more and more.

Becomingbeing: More questions! Finding jargons and pointing them out, explaining how they overlap with other jargons, explaining how a particular jargon benefits those who use it, how that jargon aligns with their belief system. Methodology determines belief. Phenomenology is both a methodology and a belief system. Nihilism is both a methodology and a belief system. Compare a Jesuit with a Protestant—methodological differences. A Democrat with a Republican—methodological differences. Jargonizing.

ThunkChat, 6:42 AM

Becomingbeing: A language is just a large form of jargonizing. Each individual belongs to several jargon groups. These jargon groups have each their own methodology. These various methodologies overlap within the individual.

Swampman: How do we choose our methodology?

Becomingbeing: Circumstances, available technology, gut feelings. We grow up in a certain culture in a certain era. We use certain technologies which shape how we think. We have gut feelings about ideas. We have certain teachers. Parents. We rationalize our actions after the fact. Those rationalizations shape our worldview. Life is rationalization.

Vatbrain83: I am willing to concede some of your points. As I just said, I think that discussing things in a chatroom shapes the argument. That right there is a way that technology shapes methodology. Fine. And I do think that you and I, BB, have different methodologies. And we have different beliefs. But not all our beliefs are different. And not all of our methodologies are different. We do not each just have 1 methodology and 1 corresponding belief. So, if methodology and belief are related, how are they related? Because I just don't see a 1-1 correspondence. How many methods?

Swampman: We talk about how chatrooms shape our discussions, but our chatroom discussions haven't remained static. Look at those big paragraphs up there! As we've gotten to know each other, we can assume certain things about each person's style of thinking, and also we are more comfortable with each other. Also, for instance, the discussion is shaped by many people are in the room and how well those people know each other. I mean, speaking for myself, you two are the two I know best in this chatroom, so I feel more comfortable talking at length when you two are in the room. Others visit this room, and I don't know them as well, so I don't say as much.

Vatbrain83: "Style of thinking." Interesting phrase. And, yes, you're right, Swampy. People argue differently—if they are writing a "Letter to the Editor," if they are arguing in person with a stranger or with a friend, if they are writing a response in a journal, if they are arguing online with a complete stranger—for example, we know about trolls and how they argue. Ok, sorry you two, but the wife is tugging on my sleeve, we're taking the kids out to the park. See ya.

VatBrain83 logs off

this, huh BB? Should be outside hiking and whatnot.

Refilling the coffee, she looks at Tisha—on her stomach, her left leg bent.

ThunkChat, 6:56 AM

Swampman: BB?

Swampman: Now, it'll be quiet. I guess Saturday isn't a great time for

Becomingbeing: Oh, sorry. Refilling my coffee.

Swampman: Thought you left. VB went out with the wife and kids.

Becomingbeing: Ha—I just pictured a woman carrying around a brain in a jar for some reason labeled “cookies.” “C'mon kids, I've got Daddy! Let's go out!”

Zombie logs in

Swampman: Those would be some freaky ass cookies.

Zombie: Cookies?

Kyin turning on the AC, returning to the computer.

“Hello?”

Kyin turns to the couch—Tisha sitting up, bewildered.

“Morning,” says Kyin.

“What time is it?”

“It's a little after eight—you hungry? Or you wanna sleep more?”

“It's Sunday, right?”

“Saturday. I've got coffee if you want some.”

Tisha staring at the patch of sunlight. “Was I snoring?”

“Yep. Loud.” Kyin a wide grin.

Starting to the kitchen, turning, “Are you a big or small breakfast person? I was thinking about an omelet all morning—wanna call Fielia?”

“Huh?”

Kyin looks her over. “Crap—sorry,” she says, “You like to sleep in, huh?”

“No,” trying to stand, “I just need to go to the bathroom.”

Tisha clawing her way to the door handle.

“Ok.”

Kyin cleaning the kitchen—beer bottles in brown bags, wiping the counter, pouring a coffee.

Carrying a mug to Tisha coming out of the bathroom.

“Oh, no thanks, I don't like coffee,” trying to smile.

Sitting on the couch. “I just need about ten minutes to sit here and then I'll be awake.”

“Ok.”

Kyin to her computer, her cellphone, sending a text.

Text, 8:20 AM
Kyin: brk fast?
Fiela: YES wen whr?
Kyin: Cliche, 1hr
Fiela: c u

Pours a glass of water, placing it on the table next to Tisha.

Searches the news of the day, the weather forecast.

9:30 AM

Kyin and Tisha walking into the café crowded. Fiela standing, waving.

Sliding into a booth.

Fiela, looking at Kyin, points to Tisha—mouths, *Is she awake?*

Kyin shaking her head.

“Oh, shut it,” says Tisha.

The waiter bringing coffee cupped.

“I already ordered for you.” Fiela with folded hands, pointing to each.

“Onion and cheese omelet,” to Kyin.

“Pancakes with fruit,” to Tisha.

They nodding, each to each. Tisha closing her eyes.

Loud diner, voices overlapping chattering. The sounds of plates and forks scraping.

Fiela, Kyin—communicating without words.

Fiela pointing to Tisha—tipping an invisible drink to her mouth.

Kyin using her thumb to lift up the tip of her nose, showing her front teeth.

Which makes Fiela cover her mouth, laughing without sound.

The waiter fast bringing an armload of plates.

10:13 AM

Coming out of the diner, Fiela grabbing Kyin’s upper arm.

“I’ll see you,” she says.

“Never again beer,” says Tisha. “Who drinks beer? That stuff ruins me for the next day.”

“Alright,” says Kyin, “agreed. But it was fun,” handing her a brown bag, “Don’t forget the magazines. And give me an update on Howard.”

The three going two separate ways.

10:33 AM

Coming home, checks her mail. Into her apartment—spot cleaning the couch, the bathroom.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 10:41 AM

I've been thinking about this a lot recently. Why I've been thinking about it is probably the combination of a number of things.

1) Memory. Philosophical notions of memory, collective/cultural memory, as well as the relationship between technology and memory.

2) Last night, Tisha came over and we hung out. It's the first time we really hung out together without Fiela, so I got to know her a little better. She's just my kind of person. Fiela and I were making fun of her this morning, because she just couldn't wake up, even when we were leaving. And I thought that was cool, that she felt comfortable enough to not feel obligated to wake up, to not pretend to be all chipper. I know Fiela and I both love getting up early, and I like it that Tisha was comfortable with that. I'm mentioning all this, too, because Tisha is African-American. So, yes, race is always in the back of my mind, but sometimes it comes to the front of my mind. It's pretty much impossible not to think about race when living in this city. Hold that thought.

3) I'm also thinking about—tomorrow is my Halmoni's birthday. She will be 87. That means when the Korean War started, she was around 28 years old. My Halmoni can read and speak Japanese, because back then Korea was dominated by Imperial Japan. So she grew up learning Japanese. Trying to get these stories out of my mom (I have to get them from my mom, because my Halmoni doesn't talk about it) is like pulling teeth.

So I'm thinking about. What am I thinking about?

DC is a de facto segregated city. The White half lives West of Rock Creek Park, the Black half lives East. Asians and Latinos live right in the middle, on the line (now, of course there are exceptions to all of this).

I'm not sure to explain what I'm thinking about, how to connect it all together.

I'm thinking about my Halmoni, about her growing up when Korea was a Japanese colony and then suddenly the Korean War coming. China (USSR) and the US (UN) coming into Korea. But all I get of her story is bits and pieces, if that. About North Korea and South Korea. About East DC and West DC. About my mom. Fiela, Tisha, me.

The shootings.

Ah, I don't know what I'm thinking, I guess I can't put it into words.

Birds loud.

Chatting outside the window.

Swivels and clicks on—mutes—CCs—the television.

On the screen, the opening of a movie. She puts on glasses.

Moves to the couch, watching the credits, the names flickering—a serial killer film.

Yawning yet watching until a commercial break. Then flipping—

A cooking show.

World news.

Sports update.

Group-dating show.

Glossy-pastel Disney show.

Insurance commercial.

Serial Killer.

Clicking on the AC—sitting, stretching out onto couch. Half sleeping/watching.

Sunday, June 21st

2:33 AM

Sunny, humid, 77°

Drunk men yelling.

Up from the couch, wiping drool—standing and looking down. Two groups of college kids yelling back and forth.

Closes the window, walks to water cold. Rubbing the heels of her hands on her lidded eyes. To the bathroom.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open chat.

4Humours, 2:39 AM

Energy: I guess you can't sleep again, huh Antarctica? Only come out at night?

Antarctica: Yes. Whoawhoa, here I come. I'm a maneater.

Energy: You'll chew me up?

Antarctica: Quite. What you doing up? Thought you weren't a vampire.

Energy: Ah, for some reason, usually once or twice a week I just fall asleep too early, then I wake up in the middle of the night. Not that I mind. It's peaceful this time of night.

Antarctica: Yes, peaceful, to be sure. Also, hell.

Yogi logs off

4Humours, 2:44 AM

Energy: When you do sleep, do you dream?

Antarctica: I only dream when my wife is gone. If she's with me, then I don't dream—that is, of course, if I can get to sleep.

Energy: I only dream when I sleep during the day. I never dream at night. So you've been with her a long time? Was she with you when you used to hear voices?

Antarctica: Oh, no, that was a long time ago, before I met her. This insomnia I have now is a new thing, maybe just the past year. I never thought of it as "hearing voices." For a while I thought it was ghosts, but then I realized it wasn't ghosts. But I still didn't know what it was. I just knew I couldn't tell anybody. And most of the time, those three guys would just be interrogating what I was doing. It was pretty rare for them to talk about what I was going to do.

Energy: It's weird how "hearing voices" becomes a kind of jargon, a label. A way to categorize people. And I'm sure some people make themselves fit into that category. Even though it just seems like a description. Sorry, ranting. Are you worried about them coming back?

Antarctica: I don't mind ranting. I just know if they come back I can't tell my wife. Let's just say I'm more worried than I was last year when I was sleeping fine. But I'm still not that worried. My mind is clear, it's not racing. I just can't sleep is all. Which worries me a little.

Kindheart logs in

Antarctica: You sure you're not an insomniac, Kindheart?

Kindheart: I sleep like a log, Antarctica. However, I am a doctor, which means odd hours.

Blackblue logs in

Energy: Welcome, Blackblue.

Blackblue: Thank you!

Antarctica: They come flooding in.

Kindheart: Welcome, BlackBlue. What brings you here at this hour?

Antarctica: Are you an insomniac, BlackBlue?

BlackBlue: This seems like a nice place. No, I'm not an insomniac. I'm a nurse, I just got home from work. I came here because I think my husband's got PTSD. He just flips out all the time, then the next day he is all normal. He's sleeping right now. He was in Afghanistan in Leatherneck.

Kindheart: How does he flip out?

Blackblue: Well mostly he's just different. I know all about it. Ok, so that's normal, I know. I didn't expect him to be how he was. I mean, I expected, but not like this. Sometimes I'll ask him something and he'll flip out, like he never used to do that, and it's always when I ask him something and it's always just something stupid. Yesterday, he punched out our living room window when I asked what he wanted for dinner.

4Humours, 3:12 AM

Blackblue: He doesn't drink, so don't think about that. And I gotta hurry, because I gotta get some sleep before the kids wake up so what do you think?

Energy: Has he ever hurt you, Blackblue?

Blackblue: Ha, you don't know me I guess. NO. If he tried anything then that would be at least something. But ok I will be honest, he can't perform which is hard enough because of my working hours. He is like a damn caveman. Maybe I should go somewhere else.

Kindheart: Blackblue, I think chatrooms can be helpful, but you should get some outside help for your husband. You need to talk with him about this, maybe you can ask one of his friends to bring it up? I don't know what branch of the service your husband is in, but talk to someone there and ask them what to do.

Blackblue: Passing the buck, ok.

Blackblue logs off

Energy: I'm not sure what to make of that. Feel kinda bad. I wish she could've stayed.

Antarctica: She was in a hurry. She's coming back someday, come what may. Blackblue.

Kindheart: Maybe you would like to talk about your brother, Energy?

Antarctica: Why did you choose this profession, Kindheart?

Kindheart: Like most doctors, I want to help people.

Antarctica: That's a vague clichéd response. Don't you have anything specific? Did you dream of it when you were a kid? Was one of your relatives a doctor?

Kindheart: No, sorry. I don't have any backstory. I just became a doctor. I was a good student in school and my aunt suggested I would be a good at psychology. So I thought about it and thought it would be a good way to help people and also a challenge. That's it.

Energy: Do you use the Big Book of Jargons in your work?

Kindheart: The what?

Energy: The DSM.

Kindheart: Of course. That doesn't mean I'm not aware of some of the criticisms of the DSM. The DSM isn't the Bible. It's just a guideline.

Antarctica: I just did a search for DSM. Never heard of it.

Energy: A guideline of jargonizations, putting people into categories that just happen to be made by psychiatrists who work for pharmaceutical corporations. The way the DSM is written would be as if the Constitution were written by 527s; which, of course, if the Constitution were written today, it likely would be.

4Humours, 4:00 AM

Kindheart: You lost me, Energy. 527s? I'm wondering if we can discuss things here without people attacking doctors. Why do you two hate doctors? I'm all for discussing the DSM, we used to do that in med school. Also, I am a psychologist, not a psychiatrist. I don't prescribe medication. Look, I think we got off on the wrong foot. I think this is a great forum. I can learn from you, and maybe you can learn a little from me. Maybe we can agree to start over, ok?

Energy: I agree to start over, fine.

Antarctica: Yes, fine.

Kindheart: Ok, I have to go to bed. Goodnight.

Kindheart logs off

Energy: Needless to say, the doctors treated my brother like crap. I guess maybe I came here to try and relieve some of that anger. Wasn't exactly fair with Kindheart.

Antarctica: Can I ask you a question about your brother?

Energy: Sure, go ahead.

Antarctica: Is he still alive?

Energy: Yep. Alive and well.

Antarctica: Ok. One more?

Energy: Fire away.

Antarctica: Does he have a job?

Energy: Nope.

Antarctica: Ok. Sorry to pry.

Energy: No it's ok. You're good in my book, Antarctica.

The yelling group gradually moving on.

Kyin biting the inside of her cheek.

Standing to look in the fridge—grabs an apple, a knife.

Crow cawing.

Kyin walking to the window.

Picks up the remote, clicks on the local news.

The sound of trash trucks.

News, 4:15 AM

Female Anchor: Reports of the Horse Flu in the DC area are growing, but still limited. Health Officials are telling people not to panic. If you have flu-like symptoms, doctors say that you should wait before rushing to the hospital. Treat it like you would a normal flu—drink fluids, don't go to work, and get some rest. If your children have flu-like symptoms still after a couple of days, you may want to visit your family doctor.

The ringing
phone.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Cell, 4:23 AM

Kyin: Hello?

Ian: Kyin?

Kyin: Ian!—what's going on?

Ian: Nothing, just seeing if you want to go out to breakfast.

Kyin: Breakfast? Huh? Where are you?
Hey—what are you doing here? Hold on, I'm coming down.

She stands, goes to the window.

A man in a navy suit on the corner. A leather bag hanging across his chest.

Kyin puts on her glasses, returns to the window.

He raises his hand.

Quick puts on her shoes heads out the

door. Down the hall—the elevator—the frontdoor.

To the corner. "Ian—what're you doing here!"

They hug.

"I just decided to come down. Are you hungry?"

Kyin holding his arm. "I guess—I don't even have my money, I—"

"That's ok, I'll pay. C'mon, what's good around here? What's open?"

Kyin looking around. "What? What're you doing here!"

He pats her head, looks at her. "Hey," he says. "You've got glasses now."

She takes them off. "Yes, I guess so. I'm not used to them yet. How do they look?"

She puts them on—poses.

The two laughing.

"Alright," she says. "You win. Could I at least get my bag or—I just ran out the door—ok, alright."

They begin walking—up across the bridge, down into Rock Creek Park.

Sunday morning joggers.

"Where're you taking me?"

"There's a bagel place closer to my place, but I wanted to walk and talk with you some."

"Talk about what?"

"Like—why are you wearing a suit? That's pretty odd, right?"

"Is it?"

Sunday morning bicyclists.

Ian stopping, looking up at the bridge. "It's crazy that we were just up there. It seems so high."

Kyin following his line of sight.

Then looking back at him looking. "You always did like bridges, didn't you. I forgot about that."

Ian smiling at her. "I just feel like wearing a suit sometimes, ok? Makes me feel—crisp. Oh—see," he points to a jogger passing by, "she just checked out my ass. Women love men's asses in suits."

"Ok, yeah, right."

They resume walking.

"Anyway," looking her up, down, "what is that you're wearing? Some kindof lovely sweatpant ensemble."

Kyin grinning as he continues.

"And you've chosen a nice hooker-chic tank-top as well—what color is that—oh, black—what a surprise."

Grinning, pulling him out of the way of a running golden retriever, the owner trailing behind.

"I do what I can," says Kyin.

"Yes—more's the pity."

Slow moving sun coming in.

The city yet quiet as they pass under P Street Bridge, begin walking up the hill.

Kyin turning to Ian, shielding her eyes from the sun. "Why did you send me a rock?"

"A rock—oh, the diamond. Because I knew it'd be safe with you."

"Diamond?"

Walking across the bridge, toward Dupont. Waiting at the light.

Ian with his hands in his pockets. "It's a black diamond. Millions of years old, from space—a meteorite, maybe aliens—where is this place?"

Biting her cheek. "It's right there," she says, pointing.

Into *Bagels, Etc.*—squeezing past bodies to the end of the line.

Ian looking at Kyin, holding up fingers, two.

"Two checking out my ass," he says.

Making Kyin smile.

The line fast moving. They come to the front, place their orders, wait.

The woman handing them a brown bag. "Ok, here you go!"

Kyin a bright smile, nodding. "Kamsahamnida!"

The woman surprised. "Oh—Hanguk saram?"

"Ne," says Ian, winking, nodding. "Annyeonghi kyesayo!"

The two pushing their way out of the busy bagelry.

To Dupont Circle, sitting on the bench black.

They open each their foil-wrapped bagels.

Sip slowly their styrofoam coffee black.

6:07 AM

Persons walking past the fountain. Sitting on benches. Continuing through the circle.

The sounds of cabs honking braking. Firetrucks winding around and out New Hampshire.

"This bagel is damned amazing," says Ian.

Smiling Kyin chewing, swallowing.

6:27 AM

"Today's Halmoni's birthday," says Kyin, cleaning up the trash.

"I know," says Ian.

Turning her head. "You want to come with me to see her? Mom's expecting me."

Ian leaning back into the bench, folding his arms.

"I need a little nap," he says. "Wake me in a half hour, ok?"

Closing his lids.

6:44 AM

Ian suddenly speaking. "Do you know why Dad disappeared?"

"No—you know how they are, they never—wait, don't think about bringing this up today, ok? You know they'll just stonewall you."

"He died in North Korea."

Silent Kyin.

He continues, turning and leaning toward her, “He was a North Korean spy. He worked for them, sending them information, and then they killed him.”

Kyin leaning her chin into her hands. “A North Korean spy.”

Looking over her palms, her fingers, fingertips.

Sitting up, pulling back her hair, “Ok, alright, how did you find this out?”

Ian turning full to her, his right leg bent onto the bench. “I know—it sounds crazy, right? The word ‘spy’ just makes people groan.

“Dongsang, you know how it works—it’s a jargon, it’s been jargonized, so now people think spies are just in movies and TV shows. Spies did exist, but now they’ve been jargonized out of existence—they’re now called ‘operatives,’ or ‘agents.’ He wasn’t James Bond or anything, he was just someone who passed along information.”

“No, I know spies—operatives—agents—still exist, ok. I mean, they just arrested some Israeli spies. That’s not what I’m saying—I’m saying how, specifically, did you come to know that our father was a spy?”

“Haraboji.”

Kyin stretching her arms forward onto her knees, her head down.

“I went looking for him, you know. Like I did when I was sixteen or whenever that was. So I told Mom if she didn’t tell me where he was I would go off again like back then. I yelled at her—and she gave in and told me to talk to him.”

“I’m listening.”

“I went to Korea and stayed with Imo, and—”

Lifting her head. “You saw Imo?”

“Yes, I stayed with her. She asked about you.”

Her eyes glossed, following the sidewalk, the spokes of a passing bicycle.

Looking back at Ian.

“Ian,” she asks, “where were you—really?”

“They live in a city called Ilsan, which is really just a suburb. Everything around that area is just sort of Seoul pushing outward, it’s such a huge city.”

Shaking her head—returning to her lowered arms, her knees as he continues.

“And the subway over there is much larger—I rode it right into Seoul and met up with him—and we went drinking a couple times, we got drunk on soju—he likes to drink—and he told me about these papers he had—about Dad—so I thought he was talking drunk—

but he brought it up again the next time, so I pressed him on it—and the next time we met he brought this file with these documents.

“He just gave them to me,” says Ian, reaching into his bag, “Some of it’s in code, so I don’t even understand a third of what’s here,” pulling out a brown envelope, a folder, showing them to Kyin.

She sitting up. “What is this?”

Ian cocking his head.

“What do you mean? It’s the documents—he didn’t want them anymore—he said we should know, that it will come out someday anyway.”

Looking over the documents, biting her cheek.

Flipping the pages.

“But—what are these?”

“I just told you—documents about Dad. I need to ask you to hold on to these. I can’t—I don’t have anywhere safe for them.”

The circle, the benches, filling with people.

A sheet of paper between her fingers as she looks at Ian. “What are these—really? Did you make them up? Did you really see Grandpa? Where were you, really?”

“I told you, they’re—a dossier, if you will.”

Looking across at the Farmer’s Market—a crowd slowly gathering.

“Ok,” she says. “I’ll hold onto them—Oppa,” touching his hand, “you’re not going away too long, are you? Come back soon, please, ok?”

Nodding, smiling, “No, I’m done with all that. I know now what’s real, what’s truth.”

“No, seriously—don’t go away, ok?”

He stands. “Let’s plan on doing this again next week, ok? You can take me to that other bagel place, so I can compare.”

Kyin grabbing his wrist.

The papers blowing onto the ground.

“Aissh!”

Ian running to collect them.

Carrying them back to the bench.

Watching him stacking the pages, aligning them, sliding them into the folder.

“Don’t let them get away,” he says, handing her the folder.

8:03 AM

Coming up Connecticut, Kyin calls her Mom.

Cell, 8:03 AM

Mom: Hello?

Kyin: Mom?

Mom: Oh, Kyin. You don't need to bring anything.

Kyin: Mom, I want to, ok? Just tell me when to come.

Mom: Come at 11 o'clock? It that ok?

Kyin: You tell me, Mom, ok? Is that—ow, shit!

Mom: What, are you ok? What happened?

Kyin: Yes, I'm fine. Don't worry about it, I'll be there at 11, bye.

Rubbing her head.

Making a fist.

Swinging her arm

full and fast—

punching a brick

wall.

Then flapping her hand open in the air.

Closing the phone.

8:28 AM

Into the apartment, throwing the folder onto the coffeetable.

To the kitchen for water cold, turning on the AC.

Icing her hand. To the bathroom—wrapping a bandage around the fist.

Onto the couch, feet on the table—drinking, closing her lids.

9:33 AM

Kyin slogging to the shower—cold water and shampoo, the towel soft.

Clothes and makeup.

Glasses.

10:10 AM

On the platform and into the train.

Sits and reads.

10:52 AM

Coming down off the platform, pulling out and putting on sunglasses.

Sitting on the curb.

11:12 AM

Black car sliding in front of Kyin.

Her mother leaning out the window.

Kyin stepping into the passenger seat.

"Sorry, I'm late," says her mother.

"Not really," says Kyin. "I couldn't find anything for Halmoni."

The car pulling out onto 355.

"Good. She just wants to see—oh, your hand! What happened—oh, Kyin-ah, you should go to the doctor."

"No, it's fine. I'm fine."

Weaving through cars, lights. Fast out of Rockville into Gaithersburg, Montgomery Village.

11:44 AM

Into Germantown, they pull into a shopping plaza, in front of a Korean restaurant—*Mashiso*.

Inside, Kyin sees her grandmother—walks fast to her, hugging.

1:11 PM

Driving into *H-Mart*.

"Let me buy you some groceries, ok?"

"How'm I gonna get them home?"

"Just take them on the subway, ok? Just a little."

"Fine."

They exit the car, walk into the store crowded.

The produce section crammed with bodies. An old woman looking over each honeydew—rotating it, holding it to her ear. A group of men and women sorting through chestnuts.

An ajumma dragging her boy to the bok choy, selecting a few stalks. He raises his head, looking up at the fluorescent lights.

1:21 PM

Past banchan.

"Mom—don't freak out ok? Ian came to my place today. We had breakfast together.

And he was talking about Dad being a spy and all this stuff. It wore me out. That's why I hurt my hand."

Her mother raising her head from the cart. "Ian hurt your hand?"

"No, Mom, I hurt it because—just because, ok?"

"Well, he shouldn't tell you all that."

"Yeah, well, you know how he is. Making stuff up."

Continuing into the frozen foods. Kyin grabbing mochi.

1:26 PM

Paying at the checkout.

"So what do you think about Ian coming to see me?"

"I wish he would not tell you all that."

"Yeah, well. Whatever. Mom, what really happened to Dad? Did he run off with a woman?"

Looking at Kyin from an angle. "You said Ian told you."

"He told me stuff about Dad being a spy—you know how Ian is."

Pushing the cart to the car.

"It was horrible. They thought everyone in Gwangju was a spy."

Stopping Kyin standing.

"What?"

Continuing to the car—unloading bags.

Coming behind. "Mom—did you—did Ian come and ask you about Dad?"

Pushing the cart to a dropoff area.

Into the car.

Talking slowly. "Ok. Mom. Listen, ok? Before you start driving, ok? Ian sometimes talks crazy, right? You know that, right?"

"Not crazy—he was a cute boy. He used to bring me little presents and—"

"Mom—stop, ok? Ian sometimes talks crazy, right?"

"He just tells stories, that's all. Don't call him crazy. He just tells stories. I think he will be a novelist someday. Or a poet."

Starting the engine. Kyin leaning back into the seat.

Out onto Montgomery Village Ave.

Holding her head, closing her eyes. Her left hand resting on her stomach.

2:36 PM

Change in pressure—dark sky, clouds. Fast walking across the bridge, mumbling—

"Fuckshitfuckshit," fast to home.

Cracking—stomping—cracking.

She quick throws the bag into the fridge, switching off the lights, closing the blinds.

"Aiiiiiiiiishhhhhiiiiiiibbbballlll."

Holding her head, covering her eyes.

"Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck."

The palm of her right hand pressing into her right eye.

She shoves her head into the corner of the couch, continuing talking, hand pressed into her eye.

“Ok, ok, ok, ok, ok, talk, talk, talk, I’m talking, talking, talking, ok, ok, fuck!”

Cracking—thunder—stomping.

“Shit shit shit shit shit shit shit owwww owwww this fucking hurts! Fuck dammit stop! Talk talk talk, nothing, ok, nothing to talk about anyway, right? So what’s to talk about stop it! Fuck fuck la la la la la la la la la laaaaaa ok ok ok ok I’m fine! Be better, Kyin, yes! Ok fuck it what it is it is fuck and that is what it is because fuck and shit and dodo birds and peepee weenies and that’s all folks! Because shit shit fuck!”

3:29 PM

Growing silent.

Breathing, open-mouthed.

The sound of rain continuous.

5:44 PM

Solstice sun rising.

Turning on her side.

Delicately resting her hand.

7:59 PM

Coming slowly up off the couch. She looks for and finds, puts on her sunglasses.

Feet slapping into the kitchen—water cold.

Computer to the couch, her lap.

Searches—“North Korean spies,” “North Korean spies news,” “North Korean spies history”

“North Korea operatives,” “North Korean operatives news,” “North Korean operatives history”

“North Korean agents,” “North Korean agents news,” “North Korean agents history”

“Black diamond,” “Black diamond outer space,” “Black diamond aliens”

“Carbonado,” “Carbonado outer space,” “Carbonado aliens”

“Carbonado mines”

“Carbonado Central African Republic”

“Central African Republic”

Blog, 10:11 PM

Typing with 1 hand. A lot on my mind. Migraine today. Ian. My mind now feels amazing—like I understand everything. Post-migraine high. The best feeling. Clarity. Indescribable.

Migraine was a drill into my eye hole. Came out of nowhere. Atmospheric pressure? But it's been raining off/on for a month. Sun/dehydration?

Migraine was worst feeling. Post-migraine is the best feeling. I feel so happy and am crying a little bit.

I love post-migraine!

Today Ian outside my window. Maybe write more when I fix my hand.

I don't know why I punched a wall. Must've been emotions. Just suddenly I punched it. And then it fucking hurt. It still hurts. I punched that thing as hard as I could.

Odd when you know that you did something, but you don't know why.

Searched online about Ian's stories. Mom is so damn frustrating.

Halmoni makes me feel so cozy.

An insane day.

Continues looking at webpages—learning, refining, expanding her search.

Clicks open her blog.

Shuts down the computer.

Opens the blinds.

Brings a blanket to the couch, laying with eyes open, looking at the ceiling.

On her stomach, holding her left hand with her right.

Thursday, July 2nd

4:44 AM

Sunny, clear, 84°

Door slamming—keys jangling—the ding of the elevator.

Kyin silently dressing—eyes half-closed—putting on shoes.

“What time is it?” she says aloud.

Walking out and down. Through the exit door, Neighbor 44 walking his dog.

“What the fuck?” she whispers—“What the hell time is it?”

Turning and taking the elevator, returning. To the window—the man smoking, the dog sniffing.

Looks—sees Neighbor 22's car yet present. Brings a chair to the window, watching the man and his dog.

Chin in her right hand, her left hand in a cast on her thigh.

Then slowly dresses, packs her bag.

5:25 AM

Down, out—across to 20th Street, finds a carshare sedan—holds up her card, unlocks the doors, enters. Moves the car outside of her apartment building, shutting it off and lowering the visors.

5:44 AM

Neighbor 22 slams through the building door—tossing a brown bag into the trash, unlocking her car, and driving.

Kyin jumps out—watches the car turning left—grabs the bag, tossing it on the passenger seat. Driving fast up and onto Connecticut, heading south.

Comes quick upon Neighbor 22's car—tapping the brakes. Down to Dupont.

Massachusetts

New York

295 North

Passing a small sign, the car moving into the right lane. A long line of vehicles funneling into the exit.

**NSA
Next Right
Employees Only**

Kyin continues on to the next exit, stopping at a gas station.

Inside—coffee black.

Drinking, browsing the aisles. Through the window, a museum.

Puts on glasses, reads the sign.

**NATIONAL CRYPTOLOGIC
MUSEUM**

“Cryptologic—what the fuck?”

To the cashier.

“Hi—do you know when that museum opens?”

“Around nine, I think.”

“And—do you have the time now?”

“About—seven twenty,” he says.

She pays, looks up at him. Returns to her car—reading.

Coffee soothing in her hand, her stomach.

9:10 AM

Coming into the Museum empty. A small space, quiet.

A woman sees Kyin, approaches. “Is this your first time here?”

“Oh—yes. I was just getting gas and saw this place.”

“The National Security Agency is an important part of our country’s legacy. Codebreakers have been around since before this country was founded, and they continue to play an integral part in our nation’s security.”

“Ok.”

“Would you like a guided tour of our facility?”

“Ok.”

The woman walks Kyin to a display.

“This was one of the earliest cryptography machines used. These machines are often called ‘black boxes.’ This particular device was—”

“I’m sorry—why are they called ‘black boxes’?”

“‘Black box’ is a terminology that has come about. This particular device was used during WWII by the Nazis. It is a type of device called an ‘Enigma machine.’ These are cryptologic machines that were first developed during WWI. Over here we have a collection of Enigma machines, all collected from Germany during WWII. The Enigma machine is famous also for its code being broken by Allied cryptologists, the most famous of whom was Alan Turing, a man who—oh—”

The guide interrupting herself as a crowd of schoolchildren enter.

“You’ll have to excuse me, our scheduled tourgroup has arrived early. Please enjoy your visit!”

Kyin watches the crowd enter—obstreperous, pointing, yawning, giggling.

Then continues moving through displays, reading through each.

**NSA MEMORIAL
DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN
THE SECRET DEFENSE OF THEIR COUNTRY**

WOMEN IN CRYPTOLOGY

Women have a long history in American cryptology. Female cryptologists were pioneers not only during the two World Wars, but even earlier, during the Civil and Revolutionary Wars.

BIOMETRICS AND CRYPTOLOGY

Biometrics is the science of identifying citizens through biological technology such as fingerprints, retinal scanners, speech recognition, or facial recognition. Biometrics is at the cutting edge of technology and national security. A database consisting of a particular body part (face, fingerprint, voice) can be matched up with a visual image. Each day, lives are saved through Police use of these technologies. These databases are crucial in protecting our country. The NSA is the leader in developing cutting-edge Biometric technologies. For instance, using facial recognition technology (FRT), cameras placed in an airport can identify a terror suspect by matching their facial profile with the profile in the computer's database.

COMPUTERS AND CRYPTOLOGY

The history of computers coincides with the history of modern cryptology. Today, cryptology deals almost entirely with data encryption. When you use the internet, a box pops up that says, "This page is not secure." That is an instance of small-scale cryptography. Your email page has a particular kind of cryptologic encoding. Hackers are a particular kind of cryptanalyst, trying to crack into your computer's codes. Today, because computers have developed cryptography to such a high level, modern cryptanalysts often do not try to break codes, but instead try either to attack the physical hardware or to use a super computer to flood the code. The NSA develops systems to combat these "code floods."

KOREAN WAR AND SIGINT

The Korean War was of seminal importance in influencing modern cryptology. Developed by the NSA (then named the AFSA (Armed Forces Security Agency)), SIGINT (Signals Intelligence) was crucial in providing counterintelligence to US/South Korean (ROK) forces during the Korean War. The primary method for this intelligence was Ground Return Intercept (GRI). Using receivers placed against the ground, intelligence officers were able to pick up signals from enemy telephone conversations.

The NSA has built upon such early innovations, and SIGINT today is an important branch of the NSA. By using surveillance technologies such as wiretapping, the NSA is able to track not only telephone conversations, but also all electronic communication. This ability allows the NSA to prevent terrorist attacks, thus protecting US citizens.

The voice of the tourguide, guiding the tourists.

10:40 AM

Exiting the Museum, into her car—driving to home.

11:27 AM

Parks—gathers her things.

Walking up the hill to Columbia.

Old City Café. Quiet at midday.

“Medium falafel sandwich, fries—and a bottled water, please.”

Pays, waits. A man and woman dressed in business attire, sitting at the window.

Kyin takes the sandwich, filling it with hummus, peppers, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, beets, parsley, mayonnaise.

“Can I have a tray or something?” she asks, holding up her cast.

Salt, vinegar on the fries.

Outside to sit on the patio.

Cars, pedestrians slumping down Columbia.

Calm in the early afternoon.

Sticky skin in the shade.

12:47 PM

Into her apartment—AC—water cold—computer to the couch.

Clicking on—mutes—CCs—the television.

Searches—“NSA,” “National Security Agency,” “National Security Agency and cryptology” “NSA and Korea,” “SIGINT and Korea,” “NSA and computers,” “cryptology and computers,” “cryptography and computers,” “Data encryption,” “NSA and data encryption,” “biometrics,” “NSA and biometrics,” “Facial recognition technology,” “NSA and facial recognition technology,” “NSA wiretapping,” “NSA domestic surveillance,” “NSA and data mining,” “NSA ‘Stellar Wind,’” “NSA spy room,” “NSA paranoia,” “NSA conspiracy theorists.”

Searching, reading, refining.

3:26 PM

Carries the computer to her desk, plugging it in.

Pushes her arms toward the ceiling, standing on her toes.

To the kitchen, grabbing an apple, a knife, a paper towel—placing them each onto the coffee table. To the bookcase, loading folders onto her cart—an armload. Taking several trips to stack the full catalog of files next to the apple, the knife.

From her bag, the brown bag; from the brown bag, the envelope; from the envelope the file from the morning's trash. Writing the date on the folder and tossing it on top of the pile.

From the drawer within the table, her father's dossier. Open onto her lap.

The writing in Korean and English both.

Flipping through the pages—taking notes.

She opens her notebook and begins writing.

Notebook, 3:50 PM

Father—Choi Min Jung

Born 1952 Gwangju

518 (what does this mean?)

Instructor, Chonam National University

“Deep hatred of US” (why?)

1982—relocated to Seoul, began collecting information on US Military

Operations, collaborating with DPRK and Soviets

1982-1985 Librarian at Seoul National University (SNU)

—Later discovered to have left a wife and two children in Gwangju

—Wife (Choi Chin Hae) investigated, cleared of all knowledge

Between 1982-1987 Choi Min Jung was believed to have passed information to North Korea.

Exact dates, however are unknown.

Probable high-level involvement in the following:

KAL 007?

KAL 858?

Burma?

1987— Caught passing sensitive materials to ROK operative posing as DPRK agent. Had also various encrypted DPRK documents, all of which were later turned over to the NSA.

Stopping writing, leaning back into the couch. Rolling her knuckles.

5:05 PM

To the kitchen for water cold.

To the computer. Searches—"Geek chatrooms," "Computer geek chatrooms," "Cryptology chatrooms,"

"Computers and paranoia chatrooms," "NSA and television," "NSA and movies," "NSA and films," "NSA fiction," "NSA Hollywood."

Searches, reads, refines.

Clicks open her blog

Blog, 5:55 PM

I can type now with the fingers of my left hand. Not as sore.

The NSA is a black box.

Most people are either too much or not enough paranoid about the NSA. There are some current lawsuits against the NSA. I've just been browsing, I'll read more later. Hollywood, TV, depicts the NSA as infallible. They have magical computers that see everything. Paranoid people on the internet think of the NSA as Big Brother (big surprise, there).

I sometimes think that that book has influenced people's thoughts about government more than any other book. It's as if they take that book as the word of God, as if Orwell was not to be questioned.

I see it as a scale, I guess. On the one end, the NSA knows everything about everyone. On the other end, the NSA is a bunch of idiots. Neither end of this scale seems to me very likely. From what I can see, the NSA is very good at collecting information, but not so good at sorting through what they collect—information overload.

It's really all about classification and jargonization. The NSA can grab stuff, but they don't know how to put it together, how to create the most efficient hierarchical classification system.

That's because, incidentally, such an associational matrix does not exist.

Sometimes they sort through stuff that they—looking at it from an ethical point of view—probably shouldn't.

Having said all that—before searching about the NSA, I thought all the Hollywood/TV stuff was crap. Now I'm thinking it's just mostly crap.

I ran into Neighbor 22 a few weeks ago—her name is Cate. I followed her today to the NSA. That's why I've been doing all this NSA research. You can't even exit to go to the NSA compound unless you work there—ergo, she works there. So what is the next step? Do I try to become her friend?

All of these papers of hers, which I have stacked here, they could still be nonsense.

Blog, 6:13 PM

Maybe they are just rough drafts or maybe a grocery list, or maybe she's just crazy enough to be a skilled cryptologist at work, but when she goes home at night she's just crazy enough to be crazy. I'm thinking, ok, how am I going to resolve this? First off, there's no fucking way I'm going to crack this code, if it happens to be a code. My brain is tired thinking about this thing.

Also—the problem with Ian's stories is that there is always enough truth in them to confuse the shit out of me. Is it a carbonado? I doubt it. I mean, that's what fiction is, right? Drawing connections between things that aren't normally so black and white. But he's got me wondering how he knows all this crap about black diamonds. Where the hell would Ian get a black diamond from? So now I'm thinking I should go somewhere and check it out.

Stopping typing—grimacing resting her cast upon her lap.

Stretches her fingers. To the couch, clicking on the local news.

News, 6:44 PM

Male Anchor: The DC council voting today to enact the Mayor's DC Gang Injunction, a measure which will prohibit gang members from owning guns or becoming a public nuisance. The measure is aimed at providing a safer community and will allow DC Police to arrest groups of four or more young men standing on a streetcorner.

Female Anchor: Interesting.

Male Anchor: Yes, very. Coming up—local weather.

Stretching her feet out
onto the coffee table.

Returning to her computer, her blog.

Mutes—CCs—the news.

Blog, 6:56 PM

And Dad....ugh.

Part of the problem is where the heck did Ian get these documents? How would I have any way of knowing what "real" "authentic" documents like this look like?

If I gullibly believe these things without questioning their credibility, then, yes, Dad was a spy. He had something to do with four things—518, KAL 007, KAL 858, and Burma, respectively.

Blog, 7:07 PM

I don't know what these numbers mean, I don't know what he has to do with Burma, but right now I don't feel like sorting through Ian's maze.

A big part of me is just tired of Ian and his stories. I realized this when I was sitting there in Dupont listening to him. I just got really tired all of a sudden.

Then I got angry with him and broke my damn hand. I think Mom is probably like that—tired. She just doesn't feel like sorting out which stories are true and which ones aren't. So she just loves him, completely, and leaves it at that. Right now, I feel like in order to sort through all of the bullshit to find the truth I would need to study all this crap about cryptography and computer stuff, and I don't know anything about computers, very little, so I have to sort through all that damn jargon—what the hell is “256-bit AES”? Huh? I read this NSA stuff and at first it's fascinating, but after a while I'm always left thinking “huh?”

Boring as hell. Mom did say she was investigated. That was in one of the documents. Or, she said that everyone in her city was kept an eye on.

Little nuggets of truth. That's how Ian works. That's how all conspiracy theorists work. They connect these little nuggets and act as if they have a map. Problem is, sometimes there really are conspiracies. Of course, we don't call them that, we jargonize them, make them sound nice—but that's what they are. Conspiracy = groupthink.

Conspiracy theory = the need to feel that everything can be explained. All paradigm shifts are the result of groupthink collapsing under its own weight. How does one pragmatically know which conspiracies are legitimate and which ones are crazy? Some of them we can just tell are ludicrous. Secret government documents. MKULTRA, COINTELPRO, Operation Ajax, Operation PBSUCCESS. We know they happened, but we only know 20-50 years after the fact. Fodder for conspiracy theorists—“What will we know 20-50 years from now about what is happening now?”

The problem, too, is that I love my brother. So, often without my realizing it, he gets my mind to start thinking in line with his way of thinking. And I get all caught up in it, like some *folie à deux*. And it always takes me a while before I'm able to step back, to say, “Ok, Kyin, can you just stop making leaps here and question things?” I have to remind myself not to try and make connections that aren't really there.

I am not trying to find something; I am only looking. But it's difficult, to say the least. I can't throw out what my brother says, neither can I blindly accept his “stories” (this is Mom's jargon).

Receives a text.

Cell, 7:21 PM
Fiela: shooting
Kyin: Whr?
Fiela: Here. ColumHgts.
Kyin: wht hpnd?
Fiela: 2shot gngs
Kyin: wht time?
Fiela: trn on news

Unmutes the news.

News, 7:24 PM
Female Correspondent: Which is what the DC Police have been trying to counteract. Back to you, Clark.
Male Anchor: A terrible tragedy. Up next, a Bethesda woman quits her job to open a bakery!

Calls Fiela.

Cell, 7:27 PM
Fiela: Did you see it?
Kyin: No, I only caught the end of it. What the hell happened? It looked like the reporter was standing next to the Metro.
Fiela: Yeah, it was right outside the Metro platform thingy. Two guys were shot—one's dead, the other's in the hospital.
Kyin: What? I thought that was a safe area?
Fiela: Yeah, I know, right? They think these guys all knew each other. Maybe a gang related thing. They shot this guy's car all up.
Kyin: Did you two hear anything?
Fiela: I don't know where Tisha is; she hasn't come home yet and she won't answer her phone. But she usually comes home the other way. No, I wasn't here.
Kyin: You seem kinda shaken—you want me to come over?
Fiela: No, don't come. It's too late. I don't know what the hell my problem is. This stuff doesn't usually effect me like this. I think I'll be good tomorrow. I think it's just because I was on the Metro today and I had to wait and I was really pissed off because I just wanted to go home and have a glass of wine. And it was because of this shooting, these guys being killed. So, I mean, I was sitting there bitching, when—you know?

Cell, 7:33 PM

Kyin: How about I agree not to walk over, ok? I'll just take a cab.

Fiela: No, I'll be fine. I think I'll just watch some dumb shows and go to bed. I'll email you, ok? You're phone's loud now, I'm hanging up ok?

Sliding into her sandals.

Holding the phone with her shoulder and ear, her cast

propped below.

Using her right hand to pack her bag.

Out the door—the hallway—elevator—door; up to Connecticut, walking with her arm up.

8:04 PM

Calls Fiela.

Cell, 8:04 PM

Fiela: Hello?

Kyin: I'm here.

Fiela: Where?

Kyin: At your place. I'm outside.

Fiela: What—hey, ok.

Kyin looking up.

Fiela at the window.

Fiela at the door—barefeet.

"You're a asshole," she says, letting Kyin in.

"What? Why?"

The two walking down the hall.

"You just are, ok?"

Fiela opening the door to the stairwell—Kyin grabbing her arm.

"Are you sure you wanna use the stairs?" she asks, looking at Fiela's feet.

Fiela looking down. "Oh," she says, "How the hell did I do that?"

The two walking to the elevator, entering.

"I searched online about it, but no one really knows anything yet. Just that it was two guys and probably crew members."

"God, that's so damn vague. 'Crew,' is such a damn jargonization. What the hell is a crew shooting? That tells us nothing."

Down the hall.

"Oh, shit." Fiela turning to Kyin. "I forgot my damn keys again."

"Again? What do you mean, 'again'?"

"Shut up. I do this sometimes, ok?"

The two walking back down the hall.

"It usually doesn't matter, with Tisha around. Can you try her again?"

Kyin calling—waiting—hanging up.

"Nothing."

Down to the lobby.

"Ah, Fiela," says the woman.

"Hi, Mrs. Tesfai—I forgot my keys again."

"Again?" Mrs. Tesfai shaking her head.

She turns and looks at a wall of boxes—reaches in and grabs a key.

"Here you are," she says.

"Thanks—I'll bring it back tomorrow, ok?"

8:17 PM

Into the apartment. Fiela to the couch, cupping her wine burgundy. Clicking off the television.

"You hungry?" she asks.

"A little."

Nodding at the kitchen. "Tisha moved the menus to the drawer by the window if you want a delivery."

Kyin to the kitchen, the drawer. Looking through the cabinets, the fridge.

Fiela yelling. "You kinda look like a badass with that cast, you know?"

Kyin bending into the fridge. "Like a dumbass, you mean."

"Can you bring the wine?"

"Ok—what about that taco place, do they deliver?"

"Oh—uh, *Federales*? I dunno, look em up."

Kyin coming with the wine. Walking to Fiela's computer.

"I don't think that's the name of it," says Kyin, typing.

Tisha slipping through the door—"Hey, Kyin."

Fiela up from the couch, loud. "Hey!—where've you been!"

Tisha wide-eyed, looking at Kyin. "Wow—would you like some more wine, Fiela?"

"There was a shooting, ok!"

"That's nothing new. Anybody hurt?"

“Two guys died!”

Tisha hanging up her bag, placing her phone onto the table. “Fiela, you don’t need to yell ok? Quiet down. I’m tired.”

Tisha into the bathroom. Kyin to the couch.

Fiela clicks on the television.

They watch a sitcom.

9:14 PM

Tisha coming out of the bathroom, walking into the bedroom.

Coming out with sweatpants, pink t-shirt.

“I needed that,” she says.

“Tough day at work?” asks Kyin.

Tisha shaking her head as she leans over to pick up a sock, tosses it into a closet.

Onto the chair. “No, I started at Howard. Just one class this summer.”

“Oh, cool,” says Kyin. “How is it?”

“It’s—the coursework, it’s Art History, so I know most of it, which I didn’t expect. It’s just I’m not used to being back in school with all, you know, people and professors and—”

She rolls her hands.

“All that bullshit,” she says, “—but don’t get me wrong, I feel really good. I was probably pretty stupid to start in the summer, but I’m actually glad, because even though it’s a shock for me, it’s probably not as much as it would’ve been starting in the Fall, but still—hey, what happened to your arm?”

Fiela lowering the volume. “You just noticed that?”

“Just my hand—an accident, it’s fine.”

Fiela flipping channels. Coming to a reality show, stopping.

They watch.

10:02 PM

Fiela clicks the channel over to the news.

News, 10:02 PM

Female Anchor: Coming up, the weather. But first, as part of our In-Depth segment, Marie has an in-depth story about a protest in the Sursum Corda Community. Marie?

Reporter: Community members are gathered here today to protest against the Mayor's New Communities Initiative, a measure that will tear down this community and put up a new one. [cut to video, image of Sursum Corda, voiceover] Sursum Corda is a housing project that was built in 1967, with funding from the then newly established HUD. Because of the community's layout, it is difficult for DC Police to monitor, and over time the area has become overrun with crime. [cut to reporter standing in front of buildings with protestors] Sursum Corda is next to the revitalized NoMa district, a B-I-D area. The New Communities Initiative is a plan by the Mayor's office, in conjunction with B-I-Ds, to rebuild decaying areas of the city. Sursum Corda will be torn down and replaced with Northwest One. The Mayor's office assures current residents that they will be offered an exchange for their current housing, but, as you can see behind me, the residents are skeptical about the Mayor's plan. Alicia?

Female Anchor: Thanks for that In Depth report, Marie. And if you'd like to learn more about Sursum Corda, B-I-Ds, or the New Communities Initiative, visit our website. Coming up, the weather.

"Jargon,"
says Kyin.

"Jargon."

Tisha to the kitchen.

Bringing out a bar of chocolate.

"Want some?"

"Sure."

Fiela flipping. "I guess they're not gonna talk about the shooting."

Kyin chewing. "Who knows—go back after the commercial."

10:28 PM

Fiela standing, stretching. "I'm exhausted."

"I'm not," says Tisha. "I have a three day weekend."

"Night," says Kyin, laying out on the couch.

Fiela touching Kyin's shoulder, then walking into the bedroom.

The two sitting silent, watching the screen.

11:01 PM

Kyin rolling onto her side. "What's your class called again?"

Tisha muting the television. "Art history—no, the title is something like, 'The History of Representation.'

"So—ok, our first class, he asked, 'What is representation?' and that's been the question each week—'What does representation mean in this style of art, for this artist? How does it compare to last week?' It's boring, but—last week we looked at Dutch painters such as Vermeer and Rembrandt.

"And we—we, ok, let me think about this a second."

Kyin watching the screen.

"Rembrandt really loved painting wrinkles," she says.

Tisha walking to her bag, pulling out a notebook.

"Ok, right," she says, "So, some art traditions paint—or draw, or whatever—as if they're looking out onto the world," here holding her hands flat, moving them to mime a picture frame, "and others—like, if you look," flipping through the pages of her notebook, "if you look at *Girl With a Pearl Earring*, you see the entire background is blackish.

"Rembrandt did that, too—the black background—or, sometimes, a little halo of light.

"And a lot of artists painted someone sitting in front of a window or something, with light pouring in on them.

"So, suddenly," she says, sitting on the chair, "there is, coinciding with the history of representation, a history of looking at other people. Sometimes they are looking back at us, at the painter, the viewer, and other times they are—they're just, it's like we're spying on them—like they don't even know we're there, watching them."

Sitting Kyin.

Tisha continuing, "Of course, that's not all we talk about in class. This guy, Sebald, he brought this book to class—a lot of artists—those Dutch artists were always painting country scenes with windmills and all that—but they also, hell, Rembrandt painted scenes so that not only were we looking at people without them knowing, but he would have these guys dissecting a dead body—" she flips through the pages of her book—holding a picture up to Kyin—"here, look," she says.



"So, now," says Tisha, "we're spying on people who are tearing apart a body, trying to get at the inside of this other person—spying on their insides."

"Yes," says Kyin.

Tisha leaning back slightly, "Yeah, well, actually we—that's mostly stuff I've been trying to bring up when I get a chance—it's here in my notes—that—that the history of art sort of coincides with the history of spying on people, looking at them without their knowledge."

"Candid photography," says Kyin.

"Exactly!" says Tisha, pointing the notebook at Kyin. "Only, that's one of my weakspots—with photography, I don't know that much—but, I mean, just common sense, with photographs of people you either have people posing or you have people—right, you have candid photography."

Nodding Kyin. “But you also have people pretending not to pose, right? So it’s a kind of pose that’s—a candid pose—where the photographer would, well, sometimes they could say, ‘Ok, act natural,’ or, ‘Ok, pretend you’re being candid’—so, in that case, the photographer would be in on it, fooling the viewer. Because, really, a stranger looking at that photograph would have no idea, no way of knowing that it was posed. How would they know? To them it’s just another candid photograph.

“But there could also be a case where the person being photographed is thinking to themselves, ‘Ok, she’s gonna take a picture of me, so I’m just gonna pretend I don’t know about it,’ and—actually, now that I think about it, this is what celebrities do all that time—too bad Fieba isn’t here, she’s always reading those paparazzi magazines—those magazines, they always have these pictures of celebrities acting natural or being candid, but—really, they know, and we all know—because we’re paying for the magazine—that they know that they’re being photographed—they’re just pretending that they don’t know—they’re posing—acting.”

Tisha holding open her notebook, her pen.

“Ok—right—so, that’s actually similar to Dutch artists. Because the person sitting in front of the window, with the light coming in, I mean, someone posed for that picture, right? They’re just pretending the artist isn’t there, sketching. It’s not the same, of course, but art historians would draw a connection between the two, they would say they’re coming from the same tradition.”

“Yeah—but I think—there’s something different. A photograph is so much faster. It’s about—the difference is speed, I guess. To take a picture of someone without their knowing about it, all you have to do is push a button, right? To draw someone without their knowing—certainly it’s possible, but it’s a lot more difficult. I mean—” leaning forward, eyes lit, “Camera phones! We have these little tiny phones that just—and, in a way, ok—yeah I lost my thought.”

Leaning back into the cushions.

Tisha carrying her notebook back to her bag.

“But I never get to talk about this in class,” she says. “It’s more just—everyone there thinks they know everything, so you have to fight to just get a word in. This one guy—egomaniac, he just talks and talks and is buddybuddy with the professor—I just wish he would shut up.”

“What does he talk about?”

“He’s always going on about—what? Oh, I know—about how all art is lying—how the class should be called ‘the history of lying.’”

“Lying?”

“Lying, yeah. That shit really pisses me off—‘all art is lying’? He’s not looking at what I’m looking at.”

“It’s a black and white mentality—that’s jargonizing, plain and simple.”

Monday, July 6th

5:43 AM

Sunny, humid, 83°

Making coffee strong.

Down to the trashcan, collecting the brown bag.

Back up—writing the date, placing the file on the top of the stack. To the kitchen—rice and seaweed, kimchi.

Carrying the plate and mug to the couch. Glasses on her ears, her nose.

Clicking on the news.

News, 6:02 AM

Male Anchor: After another shooting Sunday, DC Police have reinstated checkpoints in the Trinidad neighborhood. Here’s Bob with more.

Reporter: The checkpoints were first implemented last summer after a string of shootings. They became controversial, and were challenged by the ACLU. However, the courts ultimately upheld the legality of the checkpoints, and DC Police are now, after a shooting this past Sunday, reopening them. Last summer, the checkpoints were focused upon only Montello Avenue. Now the DC Police have checkpoints at every entrance to the neighborhood, including Bladensburg Road, Montello Avenue, West Virginia Avenue, and Trinidad Avenue. In response to criticisms, the DC Police Chief has correctly pointed out that during last year’s checkpoints no shootings took place. Back to you.

Grabbing the rice with the sheet of seaweed.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Carrying the plate to the dishwasher; refilling the mug.

Leaning back; sipping slowly. Reading and watching the news.

6:40 AM

To the shower—the towel, toothbrush, clothes.

Packing her bag.

7:10 AM

Coding into the car on 20th Street. Starts the engine. From her bag, paper printed—directions.

Connecticut left
Florida right
Mass Ave right
Circle 3/4
Right across Buffalo Bridge
Q Street
Wisconsin to
M Street
Left on Key Bridge
GW PKWY
Chain Bridge Road
McLean

Reading as she drives.

Traffic increasing as she reaches downtown.

Sees thick George Washington traffic heading the opposite direction.

Parks and exits the car.

8:08 AM

Into the building.

“Yes?”

“Hi, my name’s Kyin Choi, I made an appointment a few weeks ago?”

The man looking at the book.

“Yes, ok—you’re early, I may as well take you right back.”

Kyin following him down a beige hall, into an office.

“Have a seat.”

As she sits, he rotates the arm of the desk, bringing a microscope forward.

Talking as he sits. "If I recall," he says, "you weren't sure if this was—what, a carbonado?" "Yes," she says. "My—well, to make a long story short, the person that gave it to me isn't always—factual about things. So I'm actually expecting you to tell me it's—I dunno, something else."

Holding out his palm.

"May I see the stone?"

Kyin reaching into her pocket and pulling out the rock.

The man frowning. He spins his chair, placing the stone under the microscope—then immediately sits back, turning to look at Kyin.

"Where did your friend get this stone?"

Squeezing her left eye shut. "I dunno."

He returns to the microscope, looks. Then stands, moving behind Kyin.

"Excuse me," he says, carrying the stone to a computer—laying it on a pad.

A picture of the stone appears on the computer screen. On the side of the screen is a scale; on the bottom, a series of measurements. He leans over the stone, gently moving it with his fingers while watching the screen.

Rubbing his head, he then takes the stone over to a machine shaped like a drill-press—sclerometer. After placing the stone on the plate of the machine, he presses a series of buttons. Slowly, the top of the machine begins moving downward, pressing against the rock. The machine stops, and a scale on the face displays a series of numbers.

He takes the stone from the machine and returns to the microscope.

Kyin observing.

Looking up, he says, "Where did your friend find this stone?"

Biting her cheek. "I don't know," she says.

Looking again through the microscope.

Then rotating his chair directly across from hers, placing the stone on the desk between them.

"Ok," he says, looking in at her eyes, "I'm not confident saying whether this is or is not a diamond. It has the hardness of diamond, but has none of its characteristics. What I would suggest is, if you're still interested in finding out what this stone is, definitively, I—or you, if you like—could send it off to be inspected. If this is a black diamond, it will be very valuable."

Kyin leaning over the stone. "Send it off—where?"

“Well, we would send it to a gemology laboratory.”

Kyin holding the stone.

Then standing, slipping it into her pocket. “I’ll have to think about it,” she says.

“How much do I owe you?” she says.

11:12 PM

Coming home, Kyin finds taped to her door an envelope. She enters the apartment, tearing open the flap.

<p><i>YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED</i></p>	<p>Dear Ms. Choi, You are invited to our annual building party. Please bring a guest. We welcome your attendance!</p> <p>When: Saturday, July 18th, 6:30 PM Where: Lobby</p>
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Slipping out of her sandals. Unpacking her bag. To the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on the AC. Clicks on—mutes—CCs the television. Sticking the invitation to the refrigerator. To her computer, carrying it to her desk.

Clicks open chat.

4Humours, 11:22 PM

Anima: Welcome, Choi.

Energy: Hey, Anima.

Anima: How’s your day going?

Energy: So so.

ENFJ: Hello Energy, I can tell you’re a nice person.

Energy: Um, ok—ENFJ is it? You seem nice, too.

ENFJ: Thanks! ENFJ, you know? Like the personality type. I’m really an ENFJ when it comes down to it. What are you?

Energy: I have no idea.

ENFJ: Well, you can do it online for free! Find out and let me know.

Anima: Choi, we were talking about addiction just before you came it.

ENFJ: Yeah, it sucks, my Mom was an addict (meth) and now I am becoming addicted to wine.

Energy: How much wine do you drink a day, ENFJ?

Checks her bank account—2, 546.30 dollars.

Searches—“Carbonado diamond value,” “carbonado diamond worth,” “black diamond rarity,” “diamond economics,” “economics of diamonds,” “diamond cartels,” “blood diamonds,” “blood diamonds Central African Republic.” Searches—“alcohol addiction,” “how many glasses of wine drunk,” “glasses of wine per hour,” “alcoholic.”

4Humours, 11:39 PM

ENFJ: I only drink white wine, and I only drink 4 glasses a day, every day. If I drink more than 4 I feel sick, and if I drink less than 4 I feel sick.

Anima: How long does it take you to drink 4 glasses, ENFJ?

Energy: Hey, Darger.

ENFJ: It takes me 76 minutes. Or 18 minutes per glass. In two months, I am planning on making it 94 minutes for 5 glasses, because this past week I have been thinking I should add another glass. But, really, I didn’t come here to talk about me, I wanted to hear about you too, you know!

Anima: No pressure, ENFJ.

Energy: Alright, that’s fair ENFJ. I’ll be honest with you, ok? I have no idea what it takes for someone to be categorized as an alcoholic. I think tons of people drink every night. You don’t black out?

Darger enters

ENFJ: No way, I’ve never blacked out.

Anima: Welcome, Darger.

Darger: Hello, Anima.

Darger: Oh, hey.

Anima: ENFJ, if you went a week without drinking—do you think you could do that?

ENFJ: Hello, Darger, you are nice. I’m an ENFJ, like the personality type, ok? What are you? Yes, I could go a week without drinking, but then the week after I would have to compensate.

Darger: Hi, ENFJ—yes, I’ve taken those tests, my sister was a psychology major. Anima—I think that’s from Jung, he’s connected to those tests somehow, I think.

The phone vibrating; she answers.

Cell, 11:49 PM

Kyin: Mom? What is it?

Mom: Kyin? You need to come see me, ok?

Kyin: I will, Mom—how about this Saturday, ok?

Mom: No, you have to come up today. Come on the Metro. I will pick you up.

Kyin: Mom, I’m kinda busy right now, ok? I’ll see you Saturday.

Mom: Kyin, no, ok! You need to come up here today! Just come on the Metro and I will get you!

Kyin: Mom, quit yelling, ok!

Mom: Kyin, you just come up here now, ok? I need you to come.

Kyin: Why do you need me to come right now? Why can’t I come this weekend?

Megaphone voices squawking outside the Chinese Embassy.

4Humours, 12:05 PM

Energy: How would you compensate, ENFJ?

ENFJ: Wow, you know a lot about the tests! See, I knew something about you was special, Darger, right away. How do you know so much about it, are you into studying it? Compensate means I would have to plot out a way of getting those drinks back over the next month. So if I, say, added a drink every other day for two weeks, or every other day for three weeks.

Darger: No, just my sister, she would talk about it with me.

Anima: Yes, Jung did use the term “anima,” but that’s not really what I had in mind.

Energy: ENFJ, do you mind if I ask what you do for a living?

Darger: Oh, sorry, Anima. Just talking off my head.

Anima: I think Jung’s take is certainly interesting. I just believe in, oh I cannot believe I’m saying this out loud it sounds crazy, but I believe we all have animal forces, we are all part-animal.

ENFJ: I’m in Accounts Receivable, A/R. It’s basically the billing department.

Darger: That sounds really interesting, Anima, not crazy at all. Do you mean it literally, that we all have an animal spirit inside of us?

Energy: Yeah, I’m wondering where you’re going with that, Anima. So you’re an accountant, ENFJ?

ENFJ: That’s sounds really interesting, Anima. I think my spirit is probably a bunny rabbit.

Anima: That is not what I mean, exactly. I don’t mean literally, like invisible floating spirits guiding us or whatever. So that’s what’s confusing and makes it sounds crazy. Just that we, each of us, have an animal side to us, and that that is a part of who we are.

Cell, 12:05 PM

Mom: I think it’s your brother.

Kyin: What? Ian? What about him, is he ok? Did he call you? Is he—what is it?

Mom: He just didn’t call me. So I’m worried.

Kyin: What do you mean he didn’t call you? So what? He only calls me once a month. Mom, quit worrying, ok? God, for a second you were freaking me out.

Mom: No, he doesn’t call me every month. He calls me, you know, every week.

Kyin: What, like every weekend?

Mom: No, more than that.

Kyin: How often does he call you, Mom?

Mom: I don’t know. He always calls by now. He always calls, ok, more than twice week.

Kyin: He calls you that often? Really?

Mom: Yes. Always. And he hasn’t called in—in over two weeks.

Kyin: He calls you twice a week?

Mom: Yes. Sometimes more than that. Maybe four times. But he hasn’t called!

Kyin: What do you talk about?

4Humours, 12:19 PM

Anima: And if we can identify with that animal, if we can find out which animal represents us, oh this is embarrassing, it sounds stupid.

Anima logs off

Darger: I thought it sounded interesting.

ENFJ: Me, too! I love animals. So, Darger, do you know what your personality profile is?

Anima enters

Darger: No, I never did—oh, maybe my sister would know.

ENFJ: You should find out, you are a sensitive soul, I can tell.

Anima: Sorry, I overreacted. Embarrassing.

Energy: No pressure, Anima.

Anima: Haha! Hey, that's my line!

Energy: ENFJ, can I ask why you came in here? Do you want to cut back on your drinking? Does it make you feel guilty?

Darger: Energy, don't be too inquisitive.

ENFJ: No, I just came in here. I was just surfing around and thought this place looked cool.

Anima: Did you have something on your mind, Darger?

Energy: Darger, I have no agenda, ok? I just thought ENFJ seemed preoccupied is all.

Darger: No, nothing on my mind. Trying to figure out what to do with my life. My life seems pretty pointless.

ENFJ: I love life.

Energy: Maybe you need a cause, Darger. Something to guide you.

Anima: Darger, Energy is a good person, you should listen to her.

Energy: Thanks, Anima.

Darger: Like, what kind of cause? What kind of cause is worth devoting one's life to?

ENFJ: I think you all are nice.

Anima: Thanks.

Energy: Thanks. You have to decide for yourself what kind of cause. Choose something outside of yourself. The greater good.

Darger: Hmmm.

Cell, 12:19 PM

Kyin: Yes, I know. But what do you talk about? You don't talk about anything with me. Ian doesn't either, really.

Kyin: Does he just tell you stories? Why haven't, why didn't you tell me you two talked so much?

Mom: We don't talk, he hasn't been calling me.

Kyin: Mom!—ok, listen to me. What do you and Ian talk about?

Does he tell you stories?

Mom: We just talk about everything.

About dinner, about your Halmoni, your Abeoji, about you.

Kyin: You talk about all that? What do you say? Why didn't you tell me you talk with Ian that often?

Mom: We don't talk, he hasn't called. I keep wondering why and worrying, maybe—

Kyin: Mom, just—you're getting stuck.

Just, how about I'll call you this weekend, and if he still hasn't called you, then we'll see, ok?

Mom: Ok, but.

Kyin: Ok, bye Mom.

4Humours, 12:27 PM

Anima: I like that idea.

ENFJ: I'm too busy with work to have time for a cause. I go to work, I come home, I go out with friends. Then, one day, I will have kids.

Energy: What is something important in your area, Darger?

Energy: Something that needs to be addressed? Look to the people where you live. Something that pulls you.

Darger: Hmmm.

Anima: The people where I live, yes, I agree with that.

Energy: Ok, I have to go. Peace.

Puts on headphones.

Begins music.

Song, 12:32 PM
Drunken Tiger
Convenience Store

12:36 PM
Common
The People

12:42 PM
Janelle Monae
Many Moons

12:48 PM
Hank Mobley
Uh huh

12:59 PM
Nina Simone
Ain't Got No...I've Got Life

"Fucking shit," says Kyin.

Laying on the couch with arms on her chest parallel.

"Fucking bullshit," she says.

Then closes her lids.

Listening to music.

Kyin singing, "Aint got no faith—aint got no love.

"Aint got no wine—No country. No class.—No friends, no nothin—"

Listening.

Singing, "No job—nothing—aint got long to live!—and I aint got no love!"

Standing singing—eyes closed.

"Whatve I got?—I got my hair on my head—my ears, my eyes, my nose and my mouth. I got my smile. I got my tongue—my heart, soul—I got my arms, my hands, my fingers, my legs, my feet, my toes, and my liver. Got my blood. I got life—"

Back to the couch, listening.

Sleeping.

6:24 PM

From the couch, Kyin to the kitchen. Grabbing an apple, water mugged.

Eats.

6:44 PM

Shoes and bag, out the door, down the hallway.

Out to 20th Street, to the coded car, her card. The keys, the ignition.

Left on Connecticut, Florida.

Coming down West Virginia. At Oates, she pulls out her camera.

The roadblock, police coming to her car stopping.

The man leaning over and into the window—a flashlight in her face.

Officer Robert Thompson.

“License and—do I know you?”

Kyin turning away, digging into her bag.

Handing him her license. “No,” she says.

The officer taking her license, standing and looking it over.

Then leaning back down.

“Ma’am, do you have a reason for coming here tonight?”

“Not really—just driving through.”

“Ma’am, I’m sorry, but if you can’t give a reason, we’re gonna have to turn you away.”

“Then—I’m seeing my friend.”

“Alright, that’s fine. Can you give me your friend’s name and address, please?”

Kyin sitting looking at the steering wheel.

Then looking at the officer.

“Ok,” she says, “I lied. I’m a reporter. I’m here for a story.”

The officer nodding. “I know that, ma’am. I recognized you. If you would like to do a story, I suggest you park somewhere else and walk over. We’re not letting people in unless they have a legitimate reason.”

The officer handing back her license, then pointing to the left. “You can go ahead and turn right there and head down Montello, ok? Have a nice night.”

He then walks in front of the car, nodding and waving her to the left.

Kyin turns left and backs up, turns right on Montello. Driving down 12th Street to H Street.

Finding a parking spot and backing in.

Takes her bag—walking up Montello Avenue, turning onto Oates. Begins snapping pictures.

Flashes into the night.

In the distance, the crowd, the checkpoint.

Officer Robert Thompson.

As she gets closer, he sees her and again nods. Says something to another officer and comes walking to her.

Kyin is standing in a shadow, outside of the lights. As he nears, she slides the camera into her pocket, taking out a recorder from her bag, holding it out.

“Do you have any information on the—”

Officer Thompson fast grabbing the recorder.

“Motherfucking—” punching Kyin on the left cheekbone.

“Bitch coming to my house,” he says, he points.

Kyin collapsed on the ground.

“My fucking house,” he says, he seethes.

Then turns, walking back to the checkpoint.

Flat Kyin on the ground.

9:32 PM

Digging through the freezer, putting icecubes into a bag; wrapping the bag in a handtowel.

From the fridge, water poured.

To the drawer—Excedrin, Advil—pills tossed down her throat.

To the CD player, putting on music.

To the couch, laying the towel on her cheek.

Laying with lids open.

Song, 9:39 PM
Anton Bruckner
*Symphony No. 9 in
D Minor*

*1st Movement—
Feierlich,
Misterioso*

Then closed.

*2nd Movement—
Scherzo—Bewegt,
lebhaft, schnell*

Bruno Walter
Columbia
Symphony

10:07 PM

Standing, walking to the kitchen, the freezer—changing the ice.
To her bag, grabbing the camera. To the computer—uploading
the images.

The street, police cars.

Officer Robert Thompson.

Pumping her cast in time to the music.

“You’re the fucking bitch,” says Kyin.

“Motherfucking bitch.”

Clicking open her blog.

Turning off the
music.

Using her cast to
hold the towel
against her head.

Blog, 10:20 PM

Here’s an image of Officer Robert Thompson. The bitch. We
know him. He’s the guy who shot the boy on the bridge.

Motherfucking murderer.

This morning I heard that DC Police were reopening the Trinidad
checkpoints. So, this evening I went down there—and who should
I see, check-pointing me?

He asked me if he knew me from somewhere, I said no, then he
turned me away. He said he knew who I was.

I parked close to H Street, went walking back there.

I began taking these pictures.

Then he started walking toward me, so I took out my recorder.

And—I don’t know what happened, but I was on the ground and he
was saying shit and I saw my recorder in his hand.

Then he walked away.

I wish I could remember more. I’ve been laying here with a bag of
ice on my face trying to remember, but I can’t remember shit. Now
my fucking face hurts.

Motherfucker!

Standing, walking
to the drawer—shaking pills onto the counter, then scooping them into her mouth.

To the fridge, an energy drink—the top popped.

Clicking on—mutes—CCs the news.

Back to the computer, adjusting the images.

Zooms in, refines. Smooths the edges, refines. Crops, rotates. Brightens.

Robert Thompson coming toward the camera—then walking away.

Friday, July 17th

Sunny, humid, 88°

6:37 PM

Cast, sunglasses, jeans, black button-up. The cheek slightly yet yellowed.

Sitting in a car across from the Cote d'Ivoire Embassy.

The hair pulled back, sweat on the neck.

"Sabine" comes out of the Embassy, alone stepping into a black sedan. Out onto Massachusetts, heading toward Dupont Circle. Kyin following—two cars in-between.

Through Dupont, down 19th Street, left on K Street.

Into a garage parking.

6:53 PM

Into *Solstice*, Kyin remaining outside.

7:01 PM

Officer Robert Thompson, fast walking into *Solstice*.

Sitting Kyin watching fiddling with her bag.

8:16 PM

Coming out, the two swinging their held hands. He pulls her to him—bending her mouth into his own.

Kyin snapping pictures.

Long liquid legs sliding up 16th Street, she leaning into he.

Kyin closing in, continuing shooting—within hearing distance.

She speaking French.

"I can't understand a word when you do that, baby—not a word," he says.

8:32 PM

In the garage, the two sitting in her car, his hand behind the front of her dress.

Kyin sitting low in her seat, peering with the camera—snapping.

He tugs down the top, revealing her breasts—and she pushes his cheek, smiling. Kissing his nose.

Then pulls up the top, starting the engine.

8:50 PM

Driving up Vermont, through Logan, parking on 13th Street.

They sit in the car, leaning together—then slowly emerge, she unlocking the door as his hands cup her from behind.

Shooting Kyin.

Saturday, July 18th

Sunny, humid, 88°

11:11 AM

They come out tall-stepping, bring smiles into the late-morning sun.

He holds the front door, slapping her bottom—she laughs.

Walking through the circle—Kyin gives them space, walking off the sidewalk.

Down P Street into *Blintz*.

The restaurant packed.

11:55 PM

Coming out of *Blintz*—his long arms around her, lips on lips.

He calls a cab, steps in.

“Aissh,” says Kyin, watching the cab pull away.

12:25 PM

Coming into her apartment. To the kitchen—water—AC.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

Sets her alarm.

Sleeps.

5:00 PM

Climbing from the couch to turn off the alarm.

Stepping out of her clothes, placing a bag over the cast as she steps into the shower.

Shampoo, soap, cream.

Out, dried, standing before the mirror, looking at her cheek.

Dressed, patting powder over the yellowed bruise.

Lipstick, mascara, eye shadow, liner, perfume.

6:37 PM

Coming into the lobby, Cate greets Kyin.

“Hello, neighbor,” she says. “You look beautiful.”

“Thanks,” says Kyin smiling.

A group of fifty milling. Standing, talking, drinking. Hors d'oeuvres on tiny plates.

A man standing behind a tiny bar.

"A gibbon, please," says Kyin.

The man glancing, then glancing again at her chest—handing her the drink.

"Thanks," she says, setting her jaw.

6:47 PM

Cate grabbing Kyin by the elbow, pulling her to the side.

"Do you know anyone here?" she asks.

Looking around the room. "No, not really."

In the corner with a man and woman, Neighbor 44 drinking a beer bottled, half-sitting on a table.

"I knew a few—that's," pointing as she talks, lowering her voice, "Mr. and Mrs. Perrot. They've lived here forever—if you talk to them, they will only talk about how long they've lived here."

Moving her head, "Let's see—that's—is this boring?"

"Not at all."

Cate smiling, moving her arm behind Kyin's back.

"That's Mr. Jacobson, he's lived here for about two years. If you talk to him, all he will talk about is money.

"That's Mr.—Parker, I think it is—he's a guest of Ms. Scott. She works for a lobbying group and is a very quick-witted woman."

Cate continuing talking as they return to the bar, refilling their drinks.

"That—is Mrs. Clark, she's a secretary for a Congressman—she is—she is downtown DC, through and through. If you talk to her, it is all about who you know and all that,

"That is Mr. Cummings with SEIU,

"Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, both retired lawyers—they talk only about their son who goes to Dartmouth,

"Mr. Harris with his guest—I can't quite remember her name—Mr. Harris is a radiologist,

"Miss Klein with Mr. Garcia—Miss Klein works for Homeland Security, Mr. Garcia is an engineer, designs bridges and things like that,

"And—" looking at her drink, "Would you like another?"

"Oh—no, not yet," says Kyin.

“Alright,” says Cate, walking to the bar. Kyin sits, reaching and grabbing, eating smoked trout on a cracker.

7:14 PM

Cate is talking, drinking, talking, seated—drinking.

Kyin seated adjacent with Cate holding her thigh.

Kyin points to Neighbor 44. “Who is he?” she asks.

Cate looking at his stomach. “That’s Mr.—Dixon. He has a place here and in West Virginia. He used to work for Disney, and now works for—something to do with biometrics.”

“West Virginia?”

“Yes. Clarksburg.”

Kyin rocking her leg. “Sounds pretty.”

Cate looking at Kyin’s leg, smiling. “Yes, I—well, I have a place on the other side, in Harrisonburg.”

Kyin drinking.

“What’s biometrics?” she asks.

Drinking Cate. “Oh, just, you know fingerprinting, stuff like that.”

7:44 PM

Kyin’s arm around Cate’s waist. Digging through her purse—finding keys. Unlocking the door—dark room, finding the switch.

The apartment long lined with filing cabinets, computers, bookcases.

“Do you need to go to the bathroom?”

Cate silent.

Kyin drags her into the bedroom, onto the bed. Pulls off her shoes, her dress. Pulls up the blanket.

Into the main room, looking for the AC—switches it on low.

Checks the computers—each, password-protected.

Cate loud breathing.

Looking through the bookshelves, the files—codes, ciphers, manuals. Instructions, protocol—a badge.

On the desk, a stack of papers, handwritten notes.

In the bookcase—rows of books on biometrics, biotechnology, fingerprinting, voice recognition, facial recognition, bioinformatics.

Cate moaning—breathing.

Books on Korean and Mandarin.

Books on code, cryptology, topology, game theory, linguistics, information theory.

Academic journals—Kyin flipping through each, finds an article: “The Human Code, Part One: The Past is Prologue; Reworking the Relationship between Biometrics and Cryptography”—written by Cate Fremd.

In the next issue—“The Human Code, Part Two: The Future of Biometric Cryptography,” by Cate Fremd.

A different journal—“Our Genes, Our Code: Biometrics, Identity, and Cryptography,” by Cate Fremd.

9:15 PM

Drinking water cold, sitting on the couch with feet propped.

Kyin clicks on—mutes CCs the news.

Clicks open her blog.

Checks her email.

Blog, 9:16 PM

Cate Fremd—the Human Code, cryptography and biometrics Yesterday/Today—

Officer Robert Thompson and Sabine meet, have dinner, go back to her place. He spends the night. In the morning, they go to brunch, and he takes a cab—I lose him.

I’m pretty tired, because I only half slept last night in case they came out—which, of course, they didn’t.

Came home and took a little nap. Went to the building party (they call it that because both condo owners and renters are invited), and immediately Cate (aka Neighbor 22) was on me. She is either intensely attracted to me, or is a touchy-feely drunk (I don’t know her well enough to tell)—either way, she was very friendly, touching my back and thigh, laughing. Gave me info on most everyone at the party—the “DC crowd,” she calls it.

Email Inbox, 9:17 PM

From: Mom

Kyin,

I still have not heard from your brother. I am wondering if he has called you. I tried to call you tonight, but your phone was turned off. I am going to bed. Please call me tomorrow.

Love,
Mom

Searches—“Clarksburg, WV,” “FBI biometrics,” “biometrics and cryptography,” “biometrics and linguistics,” “FBI and NIH,”

“NSA and biometrics,” “Harrisonburg, WV,” “Harrisonburg,” “Harrisonburg, VA,”
“Harrisonburg NSA.”

Blog, 9:29 PM

Neighbor 44, according to Cate, works in Clarksburg, WV. He used to work for Disney. Which, of course, doesn't explain why he goes to some “Bethesda building.”

Clarksburg – ok, I'm reading here—it's also the home to the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS)—which is the FBI's version of biometrics.

This fits with what Cate said—that his work has something to do with biometrics. She also said that she has a place in Harrisonburg.

I took Cate home and she was drunk enough to go straight to sleep. All of her computers (she had 3) were locked.

She had tons of books on cryptography and math, biometrics, Korean and Mandarin. She seems to be an expert on biometrics and cryptology.

I'm five-eighths drunk and tired.

Searches—“Cate Fremd,”
“Human Code,” “Cate Fremd
and the human code,” “DNA
and Cate Fremd,” “Genetics
and cryptography,” “Human
Genome and cryptography,”
“human genome Cate
Fremd.”

Clicks off the television.

Shuts down the computer.

Drinks water.

Sleeps.

Sunday, July 19th

Sunny, humid, 86°

9:54 AM

Cell, 9:54 AM

Mom: Hello?

Kyin: Hey, Mom, I'm coming up.

Mom: When, now? Kyin, I'm worried about your brother, he—

Kyin: Mom, I'm coming up right now, ok? We can talk about it when I get there. Can you pick me up?

Mom: Are you coming now? When should I pick you up?

Kyin: Pick me up in about 40, 45 minutes, ok?

Mom: Ok, bye.

Crossing Taft Bridge,
Kyin makes a call.

Soft wind pushing into
the humidity.

Cabs coming up

Connecticut, hitting the
light red.

Families with backpacks and maps, cameras hanging from necks.

Against the wind, joggers jogging.

Down in the Metro.

Down, down again.

Doors closing, step back to allow the doors to close.

Kyin into a seat, reading.

The train chunking
along the rails.

William Julius Wilson

When Work Disappears

p. 61

As possession of firearms and drug use increase, the residents of troubled neighborhoods become fearful of leadvng the safety of their homes. Such fears decrease their involvement in voluntary associations and informal social control networks essential to maintain the social organization of the neighborhood.

Kyin watching the towns, roads, cars, fields passing.

10:33 AM

Coming down from the platform, into the idling sedan.

"Oh," says her mother, "you're early."

"I am?"

Driving onto 355.

"He still hasn't called me, ok? I don't know what to do, he—"

"Mom, it still hasn't even been a month, ok? One time he didn't contact me for probably, I dunno, six weeks or something."

"But he calls me, ok? He calls me all the time, and not once, he hasn't called me once, ok?

So, are you only going to worry if he waits—six weeks? Because he doesn't call me!"

"Mom, quit freaking out, ok? Do you know who we are talk-ing about? Ian, ok! This isn't that—"

"See? That's why he doesn't call you, because you are like that. He calls me."

Kyin turning on her side, facing her mother. "Because I'm like what?"

“Because you have to, because you see him like that, because you expect him to be like that, and you don’t worry. Because you—you just have to talk always about serious things—”

Her mother looking at her, using her right hand to touch Kyin’s cheek.

“Look at you—now you have a broken arm and a bruise on your cheek. You are just not good at talking about normal life. Why can’t you just talk about your day or the weather or—things like that?”

Kyin sinking into her seat. “It’s not a broken arm,” she says.

“It’s my hand.”

11:26 AM

Kyin sitting watching a Korean drama—*Sandglass*.

Her mother bringing food to the table—rice, kimchi, mandu, kongnamul, pajun.

“Since when do you use brown rice?”

Her mother cleaning. “It’s good for you. Why are you watching that old drama? We have new ones here.”

“I know it’s good for you, I just didn’t know you ate it. I like this old drama; it’s good.”

Her mother shaking her head, putting things into cupboards.

“Brown rice is good for you.”

Kyin shaking her head. Eating, watching.

1:44 PM

“Why are you still watching that? Are you going to watch the whole thing?”

Kyin on the couch on her side. “Why—did you want to do something today?”

“Why did you come up here? I thought you wanted to do something?”

“Not really. I just knew you were worried about Ian.”

Her mother sits beside her.

They watch.



4:44 PM

Kyin packing the tapes—*Sandglass*—into her bag.

The two exiting the house, stepping into the car.

“Have you got enough money?”

“Yes.”

5:03 PM

Kyin pulling her bag’s strap over her head.

Her mother points to the cast. “You should have a checkup,” she says.

“In two weeks,” says Kyin.

“Thanks for the tapes,” she says.

5:45 PM

Carrying a burrito in a bag across the bridge.

Home—to the kitchen for water cold. Turns on the AC.

Takes a tape from her bag—*Sandglass*—pushing it into the VCR.

Eats and drinks and watches.

7:57 PM

Stands—to the bathroom.

To the kitchen—an apple.

Inserting another tape.

10:36 PM

Stretches, looks through the window.

To the bathroom.

Pushing in another tape.

Wednesday, July 22nd

Sunny, breezy, 77°

5:57 AM

Down, down, down.

Redline train, Glenmont.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

Into the train, Kyin sliding into a seat.

Five seats in front, Neighbor 44—Mr. Dixon—sitting, reading the paper.

6:16 AM

Bethesda—up and out.

Mr. Dixon into an office building.

Kyin into *Ristretto*, in line.

Sends a text.

Text, 6:30 AM

Kyin: wht up?

Fiel: must needs coffee

Kyin: yep. Busy?

Fiel: yep. Crime tonight?

Kyin: yep. Peace

To the front of the line, ordering.

“Triple flat white,” she says.

Then moves to the side.

To a table, emptying her bag.

Turning on her computer.
Clicks open chat.

A waiter
bringing her
order.
“Thanks,” says
Kyin.

Workers in suits
and labcoats.

Sipping the flat
white.

Through the
window, high
heels clacking.

ThunkChat, 6:40 AM

Vatbrain83: No, I’m not sure what else to say.

Becomingbeing: Good old reliable VB.

Vatbrain83: Hey, BB. It’s pretty slow in here. Anything you want to talk about?

Becomingbeing: Just checking in.

2cyborg: I don’t see you as often, BB.

Becomingbeing: I come and go—but, yes, not as often. I visit another chatroom now and then. That, and my life is a little busy right now.

Vatbrain83: You mean this isn’t your life?

2cyborg: Another chatroom! How offensive! You must now wear the letter “A”.

Becomingbeing: Heh, yeah. Actually, I’ve got something, VB. I was sortof halfway wondering the other day about the philosophy of economics. I don’t know too much about that sort of thing, wondering if either of you have any experience with that.

2cyborg: Most stuff I know about it discusses things like ‘why do people choose to buy the things that they do?’ Or, the relationship between choice and action. People buy things for ethical reasons and for practical reasons. Because X is the cheapest; because X is the closest; because X saves the environment, etc.

Vatbrain83: People buy X because of advertising. Because God told them to.

Becomingbeing: Ok—because X brings them pleasure—some people will buy illegal things, some people won’t. People buy X because they collect Xes. Because their father loved Xes. Because they hate the company that makes Y.

2cyborg: A million reasons to buy X; to not buy X and choose Y.

Vatbrain83: I would say it’s all connected to knowledge and belief.

Becomingbeing: Woah—don’t forget gut feelings, impulses. Convenience!

Vatbrain83: Do you mind if I ask you what made you think about this, BB?

ThunkChat, 6:57 AM

Becomingbeing: Oh, just. I have this object, an object someone gave to me. And this object could either be worth quite a bit of money or it could be worthless, depending on a few things (sorry, I just don't feel comfortable saying what the object is). And, yesterday I was sitting looking at this object thinking about it, about what it is right now, at this moment, its value. So I guess some would say that its value is whatever someone is willing to pay for it. While someone else would say it's value is undetermined. Of course, "value" is a jargon, and its meaning depends upon which kind of value one is discussing.

2cyborg: Must be a pretty important object, huh?

Becomingbeing: No, it's not the object so much as it is the person that gave it to me.

Vatbrain83: So it will have personal, or sentimental value, no matter what.

Becomingbeing: See, that's where I'm getting caught up. Yes, it will have. But I don't believe that that personal value will remain the same in both cases—if it is worthless, or if it is worth a bit of money. Because each case will tell me something about the person that gave it to me. And I think it will also tell me something about myself. Sorry, now I am sounding sentimental—maudlin even.

Vatbrain83: I think that's a good point. Our own evaluation of an object's relative worth will affect our feelings toward the person from whom we got that object. If we go to a store and buy something, then a week later find out they ripped us off, then that will shape our future buying choices—not only with that store, but also with other stores or companies in the future. We develop a level of trust in our buying. So if it was a used car dealer, we may end up thinking that all used car dealers are scam artists—an illogical conclusion, if it is based only upon that one bad experience, but, still a position that most would sympathize with.

2cyborg: It works not just with things that we buy, but with gifts as well. Let's say we've been close friends with someone for over ten years. And let's say that each time that person gives us a gift—a birthday present—that gift is not only ill fitting, but wildly inappropriate (according to our own standards, of course). So, some people may just write it off—"Oh, they just aren't good at giving gifts." But others may extrapolate—"Do they really not know me?" Or—"How can they be so selfish, always giving me something that they themselves want—after all these years?"

Vatbrain83: "Why do they always buy me something they think I should own? It's like they're trying to tell me how to live my life!" Another thing: we will return to a store we like, even if its prices may be higher than a competitor.

Enter Aether

ThunkChat, 7:13 AM

Becomingbeing: An object purchased always tells us something both about ourselves and the person from whom we bought it. But some objects tell more than others. And, sometimes is it the fact that we always buy the same objects. Someone who always buys a certain kind of bread even though they've never tried the other kinds. Buying the same kind of car. Never eating at the same restaurant. Routine, regularity—for some, these are comforting; for others, constricting.

Aether: I need routine.

2cyborg: To summarize: individuals purchase X because of their own/culture's 1) past influences (including internalized influences—gut feelings), 2) present demands, and 3) future wants.

Vatbrain83: I'm wondering what that object is.

Becomingbeing: It's like we want to rid ourselves of the monetary worth of some things, but it can't be pulled out. This object should hold the same meaning for me, regardless—but I know that if I'm told it's worthless that will mean something. Truth be told, I don't know if I'd rather it to be worthless or not.

2cyborg: Well, we say that gifts that are homemade mean more (not true for everyone). In a way, those gifts combine the gift of time (labor, money) with a person's knowledge of us.

Aether: "It's the thought that counts."

Vatbrain83: "Counts"—interesting word choice.

Becomingbeing: And which thought is it that counts? The amount of time we surmise that they put into thinking about the gift (did they just buy a gift card?)? So it's "the amount of thought" that counts? Is "the thought" simply the act of giving? "It's the act that counts"? Because we're not reading their thoughts, we're reading their actions. We're trying to figure out their thoughts by looking at their actions. We're trying to figure out how much time they spent thinking about the gift. Their thoughts are represented by their actions which, in turn, are symbolized by the object. (By the way, my object wasn't a gift—I'm just holding it for someone.)

7:44 AM

Mr. Dixon on the sidewalk across the street. Kyin quick shuts off her computer, packs her bag.

Following behind—several blocks—snaps pictures.

Arm sticky in the sun, fingers slipping against the button.

A car pulls up—he jumps into the back.

Kyin snapping pictures. Makes a note.

Notebook, 8:01 AM
Mr. Dixon into a black sedan.
DC tags, 345MNJK
Looked like only one other person inside, the driver.

5:54 PM

Kyin on the couch, reading.

Standing to the tapping door; through the peephole—Cate Fremd—*Neighbor 22*.

Opening the door, “Hi, Cate, how are you?”

“I’m fine. I got off a little early today.”

Kyin smiling.

“It was sticky wasn’t it?”

“Yes,” says Kyin. “I’m praying for September.”

“Yeah,” says Cate. “Sometimes after work, I like to get a drink, you know?”

“Oh, shit—shoot,” says Kyin. “That reminds me, I’ve gotta go meet a friend.”

Moving to close the door.

“Ok,” says Cate. “Goodnight.”

Kyin closing the door.

Opening the door, leaning out. “Hey,” she says, “Do you wanna come? It’s just me and my friend, Fiela.”

Beaming Cate. “Sure,” she says. “Why not?”

7:04 PM

Coming into *Crime*.

Fiela sitting in the back—waves, stands.

“Hi,” she says, “Cate?”

Cate nodding. “Yes,” she says, “I hope this isn’t too weird?”

“No way,” says Fiela, sitting. “And if it were, after a few drinks, who would know?”

The other two sitting. Kyin orders a gibbon; Cate a chardonnay.

Fiela ordering another Stoli rocks. Turning to Cate. “So what do you do? Are you a DC person?”

“What is this ‘DC person’?” asks Kyin. “Cate used that term too the other night—I’ve never heard you use it before.”

“Someone from DC—born here.”

“Oh,” says Cate, “Yes—that, too. I use it to mean someone—the downtown DC crowd.”

The other two looking at her, drinking.

“People—status people,” says Cate. “*Symbolic people*, I call them—they work in those old white symbolic buildings. They name-drop, they eat at certain restaurants. They live in Georgetown and Chevy Chase and Potomac.”

Growing quiet, looking down.

“Ah,” says Fiela.

7:24 PM

The second round; number three for Fiela.

“So what do you do?” she again asks.

“I work for the DOD,” says Cate.

“What’s that?”

Fiela’s phone ringing—she looks at the screen and begins texting.

“The Department of Defense?”

Fiela looking up as she texts. “Oh—duh. What do you do there?”

“Oh, nothing really—boring computer stuff mostly.”

Cate red nose, cheeks, looking up at Kyin.

Fiela looking at her looking.

7:47 PM

The third round; number four for Fiela.

Cate is laughing, leaning into Kyin.

Fiela sitting straight. “Are either of you hungry?—I could eat a brick.”

Kyin nodding. “Yes,” she says, turning—signaling the waiter.

They order each.

8:10 PM

The fourth round; number five for Fiela.

The three eating.

Noodles wrapped around tines, the dry white wine.

Baked tubes with cheese browned.

Moules, frites.

9:11 PM

Coming out on 14th Street, Kyin grabbing a cab. Cate steps in, sits.

Fiela watching Kyin, nodding at her looking back.

9:25 PM

Kyin dragging Cate in the bed—pulling off her shoes, pulling up the sheet.

Out into the main room, checking the computers—password locked.

Cate heavy breathing.

Looking through drawers, the shelves.

Stepping back—hands on hips, moving in a slow circle, eyeing each inch. Onto her knees, pulling an album from a middle shelf.

Photographs of young Cate. On the beach, beaming. Standing with a woman and man.

At school. Looking directly into the camera, dressed in karate clothing—a white *gi*.

Photographs of Cate aging. Teenager with braces, scowling. At a desk, studying. On a green lawn, dressed in graduation clothes. Posing in front of a pagoda, a Budda sitting, smiling.

Cate in the bedroom, moaning.

10:03 PM

Into her apartment—Kyin on the couch, calling.

Cell, 10:03 PM

Fiela: It's a new day, and I'm fuh-heeling good.

Kyin: Not yet new.

Fiela: God thank be.

Kyin: So whadja think?

Fiela: Of Cate? She wants your bahday.

Kyin: [laughing] What?

Fiela: I said, she want dat bahday—want dat bahdy for me.

Kyin: Drunk ass.

Fiela: Ok, peace be with you!

Kyin: And with you.

Tapping toes on the coffee table.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

Sleeps.

Friday, July 24th

Sunny, dry, 95°

1:32 PM

Bethesda—Kyin in a car, waiting opposite *Ristretto*. Mr. Dixon coming across the windshield.

“Aissh,” says Kyin, starting ducking down—stopping short.

Starts the ignition, looks at the time—idles.

A black sedan pulls up, Mr. Dixon stepping into the back. Kyin waiting—then pulling out.

Onto 187—270, heading North. Kyin lagging behind.

The black car increasing speed, fast passing rigs, hatchbacks, SUVs.

Through Frederick, Hagerstown—at Hancock, Kyin stops to get gas.

Makes a note.

Notebook, 2:58 PM

DC tags, 345MNJK

Fucking frustrating. Need to remember to watch my damn gas.

Hancock. Again Neighbor 44 got into black car. Again lost him.

Where is he heading? PA? MD? Not sure what to do. Last seen exiting onto 68.

Fills the tank.

Into the store—the bathroom, the aisles. Buying jerky, an energy drink, eggs hardboiled.

Driving onto 68 heading West, through mountains cut.

4:21 PM

Coming to the West Virginia border—hills and trees.

Kyin looks at herself looking in the rearview mirror—“Where the hell am I going?” she asks.

4:57 PM

Coming into Morgantown, stopping at a gas station.

Inside—bathroom, aisles, jerky, water, string cheese.

Looks at the books of maps, grabs one.

Out and into the car—makes a note.

Notebook, 5:16 PM

Plenty of time to think on this damn boring road. Realized as I was driving—Cate said, “Mr. Dixon has a place in Clarksburg, WV.” And, if I remember, the FBI has some biometric lab here. I’ve seen her again getting drunk, and now know what she’s like. Talky touchy-feely. Still puts up her guard when asked about her job or biometrics. If I said the word “cryptography,” she’d probably faint. So, driving to Clarksburg, WV. Who knows what then.

Leaning against the car—stretching.

Yawning, watching others walk into the store. A young girl holding a woman’s hand—turning to look back at smiling Kyin.

Breeze, birds passing through.

6:10 PM

Clarksburg, West Virginia.

A row of hotels. Kyin chooses one, pulls and checks in.

Up to the room, unpacking her bag, plugging in the computer. To the bathroom—urinating, washing her hands, her face. Looking up at the mirror.

“I should’ve brought clothes,” she says.

Grabbing her camera, her notepad, a book. Down to the car.

Sees a shopping plaza—restaurants, grocery, pharmacy; pulls into an Italian restaurant.

Fries, a warm pepperoni roll, a soda—eats, reads.

An infant crying—then giggling.

Chatter rising, falling.

7:28 PM

Driving down Route 50 through Clarksburg. Coming back down, stopping at a grocery store—buying a toothbrush, toothpaste, and gum. Returning to the hotel.

To her room. Turning on the AC, closing the curtains.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the local news.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 8:06 PM

I'm in Clarksburg, WV, in a hotel. Tired. Driving without knowing where I was heading. Outside of Hancock, thinking about it, I realized I was headed here, but couldn't remember why. FBI National Crime Information Center (NCIC), which is a kind of massive biometric database. Part of FBI CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Services), which is basically one of the home bases for US Government biometrics. Drove through town once looking for it, but too dark to see anything, might've even passed it.

I don't really expect to find Mr. Dixon. I'm not sure what I'm doing here, but that's alright—it's pretty. Maybe the FBI has a tour I can take. I can see, too, looking back at my notes, that Cate has a place in Harrisonburg. When she said that, I imagined it being much closer to Clarksburg—looks like a 4 hr drive from here, about 2 hours from home.

Cate has pictures of herself wearing what I'm guessing is karate clothing—also pictures of herself in front of an Asian temple with lots of Asians in the background—a Buddhist temple—could be, I'm guessing Chinese or Japanese (the writing on a sign wasn't Korean—of course, now that I think of it, Koreans have been run over by both the Japanese and the Chinese—so I guess it could have been in Korea). Also, she had those language books on Korean and Chinese. Asian fetish! Or, the correct term, I guess is Sinophile! (She was a young kid in the karate picture, and college age in the temple picture—maybe she just grew up loving Asian cultures—I might try to bring this out of her, seems like something she'd be less secretive about.)

Searches—"FBI National Crime Center Clarksburg address," "FBI NCIC," "FBI CJIS," "FBI biometrics," "FBI database," FBI Biometrics Center for Excellence," "FBI BCOE."

Searches—"FBI tours," "Clarksburg, WV directions to Harrisonburg, Va," "Washington, DC to Harrisonburg, VA."

Pulls off her pants, her shirt.

Circles and lines bristling teeth. Face washed.

Orders, watches a movie.



Sleeps.

Saturday, July 25th

Sunny, humid, 78°

6:53 AM

Sitting up grabbing her forehead.

“Dammit,” says Kyin.

To the bathroom. Back out, looking in her bag.

“Dammit,” she says.

Stumbling into her clothes. Down to the checkout.

“Checking out?”

“Yes, thank you—is there a good local breakfast place around here?”

“Sure,” the woman pointing, “if you turn at the shopping plaza just up the road, just follow the road along the outside—Emily Drive—there’s several places there.”

Kyin signing the bill. “Thanks,” she says.

Into the car, the shopping plaza, a pharmacy—buying and swallowing water with Excedrin.

Down Emily Drive.

8:03 AM

Driving through town, sees the courthouse, a pizza place, a fountain. Drives down the sidestreets.

Stopping at a gas station.

“Can you tell me how to get to the FBI Complex?”

“Sure, the easiest way would be to get onto 79 North, and take the next exit, 124—it’s right there, huge, can’t miss it.”

Off the exit—Jerry Dove Drive. Sees the facility—a wide swath of green, parking lot, a massive building in the distance.

Quick Kyin turns around, heads down 279.

“Fucking shit,” she says, pulling into a conference center.

“That fucking came out of nowhere.”

Sits—resting her head on her cast propped against the window.

Staring at the road.

“Fuck that,” she says.

8:42 AM

Driving back down through Clarksburg, exploring side roads.

Main Street, Pike Street,

Milford Street, Stonybrook Road, South Chestnut Street,

Baltimore Street, Grant Street, Bridgeport Road.

Off Bridgeport: an office building—a small sign nondescript: *M.I.C.E.*.

Kyin pulls through to the next office, parking.

Sitting there, in the parking lot: a white van, a gray SUV, a beige sedan, and two black sedans.

Kyin cleans, puts on her glasses. Looks across the street, then at the cars, the tags.

Washington DC 345MNJK

Taking out her notepad, flipping through the back pages.

“What the fuck?”

Pulls out her camera, takes pictures. Rotating in her seat, looking behind herself, to the left.

12:05 PM

Driving back to the hotel, checks in.

To the room, turning on the AC, her computer.

Searches—"M.I.C.E. and FBI," "M.I.C.E., Clarksburg," "M.I.C.E., WV," "M.I.C.E. biometrics."

Searches, reads, refines.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 12:49 PM

Staying another night. I don't feel like driving anyway. Pretty warm here.

For some reason I thought WV would be much much cooler than DC.

Ok, so I drove around and found the FBI complex, but it spooked me out.

Black SUVs and a security gate and all that.

It's a really creepy place out here in the middle of nowhere. I mean, you're just driving along, then—Wham! Creepy! From what I can figure out looking online, the FBI doesn't offer tours anymore, so I'm screwed on that front.

So I just drove around all these back streets of Clarksburg and Bridgeport, both cute towns.

And, driving along, I passed M.I.C.E.—and, for some reason, I pulled in. I think it was just a gut reaction. But now, thinking back on it, I realize it must've been because the way the building was built. They look like Bethesda buildings—they just don't fit in with this small town. And, also, I must've heard the name M.I.C.E. on the news, because once I started looking them up, turns out they have all these connections to the government—a government contractor. I'm sure this is common knowledge, so I must've read their name in the newspaper, just never registered it. It feels like I already knew all this stuff, but now I know that I know it.

And there, in the parking lot, Mr. Dixon's car. So I sat and took some pictures, waited. Nothing happened. I'm gonna go back after I eat.

Seems M.I.C.E. is now the place for FBI Biometrics, they do all the work for the FBI's new Next Generation Identification (NGI), which is located here in Clarksburg and in Fairmont, WV, which I passed coming down from Morgantown. So on the way home, I'll stop in Fairmont and take a look around. I can't find MICE's address there, but I'll look anyway.

Oh yes—MICE is headquartered in Bethesda in one of those buildings next to NIH. I'm thinking it's the building I've seen Mr. Dixon go in and out of.

I forgot how hotel atmosphere gives me a headache—a nasty one this morning, worse than the usual (not a migraine, though).

Humming
AC.

The room
growing
cooler.

Moving from the computer, opening the curtains, cracking the window.

To the bathroom, to the bed.

Closing her lids.

2:03 PM

Down and out, driving to *M.I.C.E.*. Parking in the building next, between two cars.

3:11 PM

The black sedan pulls in and parks. A man stepping out, followed by Mr. Dixon.

Kyin shooting pictures.

The man opens the door—Mr. Dixon waving him off, pulling from his pocket cigarettes.

He stands and smokes. The two men talking.

Globes of sweat running down the man's forehead.

5:44 PM

The men coming out, stepping into the car, driving off—Kyin following.

Up onto 79, heading North. The car fast picks up speed.

Passing Fairmont, Kyin exits and turns around, heads back to the hotel.

Clicks on the television.

Dozes.

Sunday, July 26th

Cloudy, 73°

2:31 AM

The AC puttering—Kyin stands, slapping the plastic—then hitting it with her fist.

Turning the machine off.

Clicks on the television. Flipping.

Brings her computer to the bed, her camera.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 2:40 AM

The damn AC is broken—or maybe it just needs a rest. I really hope I don't get another hotel headache, they suck.

I lost them going up 79. Hopefully they're heading back to DC. I guess I'll see tomorrow morning if he's out walking his dog.

I'm uploading here pictures of Mr. Dixon and friend.

There really are some pretty places here. I guess I had a case of highway hypnosis for a while there, because I don't remember seeing anything, just what I was thinking about.

They stood and talked, Mr. Dixon smoking, then went inside for a couple hours.

I'll call the man "Aether." Something about Aether seems familiar, but I have a feeling that that feeling of familiarity is just something I'm making up. Something that I want to be there so I'm putting it there when it isn't really there.

I am not determined to find something.

I am just looking.

The man seems familiar, but I don't think I know him.

Images:

The car in
Bethesda.

The license
plate.

A blurred image
of the car on
the highway.

Scenic shots of
West Virginia.

Clarksburg. The
streets, the
courthouse.

M.I.C.E.—the
black sedan, the
license plate.

Mr. Dixon and
the man.

Zooms in on the man, his face.

"Do I know you?" asks Kyin.

Flipping through channels.

4:03 AM

Turns on the AC; turns off the television.

Lays looking at the ceiling.

4:39 AM

Clicks open her email.

Email Inbox, 4:39 AM

To: Mom

Ok, Mom. I guess I'm starting to worry about Ian too. It's been 5 weeks since I last saw him.

I think I'll come up sometime this week and we can go to the police and ask their advice on what to do.

Kyin

Into the bathroom, the shower.

Wet tiles, the mirror fogged.

5:15 AM

Drying, clicking on—mutes—CCs the local news.

Dressing.

6:46 AM

Coming down Fairmont Avenue, pulling into *The Poky Dot*.

Orders an omelet—onions, cheese. Sits sipping coffee, looking through the window.

6:58 AM

Eating, looking out on Fairmont. Cars, trucks moving slowly.

A man looking at her, his brow furrowed. He says something to the man seated next to him.

Kyin looks down, resumes eating.

Bodies coming in, the diner soon full.

7:16 AM

She pays and exits, a line out the door.

Drives down roads.

Pennsylvania Avenue, Hampton Road, Cleveland Avenue,
Jackson Street, Quincy Street, Adams Street, Locust Avenue.

8:55 AM

No sign of *M.I.C.E.*—Kyin heads back onto 79 North, soon hitting 68 East.

Across the top of Maryland; down into the District.

Connecticut Avenue—home.

Tuesday, August 4th

Sunny, scant clouds, 93°

11:14 AM

Institutional architecture—square brick building, metal roof, parking in back.

Enters and fills out a clipboard. Sits in the waiting room.

11:40 AM

The nurse taking Kyin to an X-ray room, placing a vest over her chest. Exits the room.

Takes Kyin to a small room.

12:02 PM

The doctor comes in, smiling.

"Hi, Kyin. How are you?"

Kyin nodding. "Good—am I?"

The doctor sitting, flipping pages.

Looking up. "Well, Kyin, your hand is being pretty stubborn. It looks like we'll have to give it a little more time."

"You mean—what, is it healing at all? How long is it supposed to take?"

"Six weeks is usually more than long enough, but it looks like it's not doing anything at all.

So, what we'll do is, we'll put the screws to her, give you some drugs. The bad news—well, more bad news, is that you'll have to be back in a cast until we see you again."

Nodding Kyin looking at the clipboard. "Nothing at all? Is that normal?"

"It happens—not the usual case, but yes. But don't worry, we know what to do, it'll be fine."

"What kind of drugs?"

"A bone stimulant—just helping things out. A few screws here and there. We've got to coax your bones into mending."

The doctor standing, a nurse entering.

Kyin stepping into a wheelchair.

3:23 PM

Coming into the apartment. Turning on the AC.

To the kitchen, placing the medication on the counter.

Cold water in a glass.

Into the bathroom, changing her menstrual pad.

Pushes a tape into the VCR. Sitting on the couch with glasses.

9:45 PM

From the drawer, her father's dossier. Looking over her notebook.

Searches—"518 Korea," "May 18th Korea," "Gwangju May 18th," "Gwangju Massacre,"

"Gwangju Democratic Movement," "Sandglass Gwangju," "Sandglass May 18th,"

"Moraeshigae May 18th," "Chun Doo Hwan," "Chun Doo Hwan and May 18th," "Chun Doo

Hwan Gwangju Massacre," "KAL007," "KAL007 North Korea," "KAL007 United States,"

“Korea Burma,” “Burma KAL007,” “Chun Doo Hwan Burma,” “KAL 858,” “KAL 858 North Korea.”

Searches, reads, refines.

Grabs her computer, placing it on the coffeetable.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 11:17 PM

When I was little, Ian would tell me stories. No, not tell—narrate. He was skilled at drawing even then. He would draw a story, then bring it to me and narrate, moving from one page to the next, sometimes erasing or shading something as he told. So, the shading, the erasing, combined with his compelling storytelling—gestures, dynamic voice—they all made it a story that was more than something just on paper or in our heads. So I believed then that it wasn’t just a story—something “made up”—I believed it to be real.

Then we moved to the US—and also, of course, we were both growing up, we had aged a little. Probably because I was younger, I learned English much faster than Ian. It took him quite a while. So, instead of him just telling me stories as he always had, he would tell me the story, and then I would translate it back to him into English. He would tell it to me in Korean, and I would tell it back to him in English. Now, when I think back on this, I realize that that was when I began to associate storytelling with translation—translation with storytelling. I think, too, that that was when I began, *avant le lettre*, to think of “jargonizing”. Jargonizing is taking someone else’s way of putting things and putting it into one’s own language. Medical language, scholarly language, computer language, psychological language. But it is also taking one person’s Language (German, Italian, Russian, Korean), and putting it into another (English, Japanese, English, English). So, jargonizing is tied to storytelling. A story, a jargon—they are not “lies,” yet neither are they truths. They substitute one’s own truth for another’s. This substitution can be an erasure, but it can also be an equating.

When I told Ian’s story back to him in English, I was jargonizing.

At the same time, the act of retelling the story made me believe it all the more—because it was inside me, because I was putting it into new words (English words)—and, at the same time, it made me see the “storyness” (the artifice) of the story.

I saw how it was constructed, I saw that it was a story—but that unveiling, in an odd way, made me believe the story all the more.

I was still young then, though. As I grew older, a teenager (by that time, Ian could speak English fluently), it was more difficult for me to believe Ian’s stories. And Ian, for his part, maybe because he realized this, began to make his stories both more complicated and more real. Or perhaps it was the complicatedness itself that made them more real. It was a back and forth movement—as I became more incredulous, Ian in turn became more skilled, more elaborate in his tellings. I can look back now and say that it was a kind of game that neither of us realized we were playing.

Blog, 11:54 PM

When my Mom says that Ian is “just a storyteller,” it frustrates me, yet I understand her completely. Because he *is* just a storyteller.

I think the only difference between then and now is that I know that I am playing a game. Whether or not Ian knows, I can never be sure. Sometimes I think he does know—whenever I am talking to him, I believe every word that he says, completely; it is only afterward, much later, when I am alone thinking about it, that I begin to question his own self-knowledge.

The main difference, too, is that the stories now are not something he tells, rather they are something that he lives—they are his life, his being. Not ideas, but actions. So, I don’t now “listen to his stories”; instead, I am experiencing my brother’s life. So, in trying to figure out his stories, I am trying to figure him out. And, too often, I realize (after the fact) that what I end up doing is jargonizing, erasing his own experience and putting it into my own way of seeing—collapsing it into my own worldview.

I’m thinking about this now (actually, I’ve been thinking about this my whole life)—but right now it came to mind, because I’ve been thinking about Ian’s last story, the last time I saw him. Two stories actually. The first I am close to seeing, the second—I’m not yet sure. I’m thinking about those stories also because I just finished watching *Sandglass*—I tried to space it out, but I ended up finishing it today. This is a Korean Drama centered around this time period—my Dad’s time period.

When Ian came, I forget when—well, it was the day I broke my hand, so it must’ve been around two months ago—when he came, he began talking about Dad. And he told me these stories about Dad being a spy (“agent,” “operative”), and then he gave me a folder of documents—a “dossier,” he called it.

So now he does not tell or draw me stories, he instead gives me the framework; the story itself is for me to figure out. So, in figuring it out, I am all the more inclined to believe it; because it was not “told” to me—rather, it was something that I myself discovered, using his clues. The pattern becomes the story. The hints, the “dossier,” then, are the clues, pointing me toward the story that I am supposed myself to construct.

KAL007, KAL858, 518, Burma—these are not, as I first thought, codewords. I suppose to the native South Korean, especially of my mother’s generation, they are common knowledge. They are, then, Korean cultural codes. Korean cultural jargons. The fact that I do not immediately know them says something about me as a Korean-American. KAL007—a Korean Airlines flight that was shot down while flying over the East Sea of Korea. Shot down by Russians in 1983 (September 1st). 269 people died (or “disappeared,” depending on which version is given). It was a civilian airliner, and the Soviets didn’t admit to it for a while.

Blog, 12:36 AM

Then, when they did admit to it, they claimed that it was spy flight. The plane lost its communication and went off course, flying into Russian airspace. From what can tell, most people agree on that part of it. After that, it gets murky—when I say, “murky,” I mean that even today there is no consensus as to what happened (though the NSA does have some insight into the matter). Part of the reason for that lack of consensus, I believe, is the result of a general mistrust of the “official” version of things when it comes to Cold War relations—El Salvador, Cuba, Guatemala, Iran, the CIA. So, you have some asking, simply, “What happened to the wreckage—it disappeared!” (Note that this kind of disappearance happened relatively recently with the AirFrance 447 flight). Adding to the murkiness—the Russians kept the flight’s black box locked up for some ten years.

It is unclear how or why the flight went into Russian airspace—either 1) on purpose (spying), or 2) by accident (equipment/pilot error).

They never found the bodies of the victims—so, either 1) they were kidnapped by Russians/North Koreans, or 2) they were lost to sea. Oddly enough, they did find the victim’s shoes, which washed up on shore.

One final thought—some have claimed that KAL007 happened with the cooperation of South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan.

To summarize part 1 of Ian’s story: KAL007 was shot down because it was a spy plane; the Russians knew it was spy plane, because they had inside knowledge—*Dad provided that inside knowledge* (Dad was a spy).

I was born in Gwangju, but I don’t really remember much. We moved here when I was little. Mostly I remember the apartment and the street, my neighbors. But I don’t really remember it as “Gwangju”—more so I just remember it as Korea—where I was born, where I spent my young years.

The Gwangju Massacre (518—May 18th) is an important part of *Sandglass*. So, watching that drama got me to thinking. It was a kind of Kent State magnified by 40 or 50. 4 died at Kent State—it’s unknown how many died at Gwangju, but it was probably around 200. I say, “unknown how many died,” because the full extent of 518 was covered up by the ROK government.

At the time of 518, Dad was teaching at Chonnam National University (CNU)—that is one of several facts that Ian’s “dossier,” did not make up. Many of the victims of 518 were students at CNU—the massacre was centered at the University. So, obviously Dad had some real connection to the event. But who knows what that means. Another thing the “dossier” didn’t make up was that soon after 518, Dad moved to Seoul. Or, at least, Mom always told us “your Father lives in Seoul.”

Blog, 1:02 AM

I figure Part 2 of Ian's story, then, to be something like: Dad was pissed off because of 518. He was pissed at Chun Doo Hwan, and he was pissed at the US (many South Koreans saw the US as complicit in the massacre—President Reagan supported Chun Doo Hwan, and the US military had a strong presence in the ROK). So, Dad moved to Seoul and became a spy, working against Chun Doo Hwan and the US—working either for the Russians or the North Koreans.

Part 3—Burma. This one I'm not as sure about. I figure the common thread running through all of this was that Dad was a spy against South Korea because he hated both the US and Chun Doo Hwan. On October 9th, 1983 (just 1 month after KAL 007), Chun Doo Hwan was visiting Burma. A bomb went off, killing 21. This was a North Korean attempt at assassinating Chun. The only way the North Korea's could have known Chun's itinerary in Burma was to have a spy. Part 3, then—*Dad was that spy*.

Part 4, the final part—more of the same. KAL 858, a Korean Air flight. November 29, 1987. 115 dead. North Korean spies planted a bomb.

This incident took place right before the first democratic elections in South Korea were about to take place. Chun's term limit was up, but he had his best friend up for office. This was the same best friend that helped Chun execute 518. The same best friend (who later won the election) that, along with Chun, had a murky connection to Park Chung Hee's mysterious assassination.

So, the outline for Ian's story seems to be as follows: Dad was angry/hurt/betrayed by 518. He directed this anger toward Chun Doo Hwan and the US. He became an "agent". He provided information leading to the following events:

May 18th, 1983—KAL 007 shot down by Soviets.

October 9th, 1983—North Korean assassination attempt on Chun Doo Hwan in Burma.

November 29th, 1987—KAL 858 explodes, caused by a North Korean bomb.

I'm tired of writing this story.

I need to clean the kitchen.

2:18 AM

Shuts down the computer. Cleans the kitchen, her hand, face, teeth.

Sleeps.

Wednesday, August 5th

Sunny, humid, 85°

6:03 AM

Down to the trash, the brown bag. Coming into the building, brushing against Neighbor 44—Mr. Dixon.

“Oh—excuse me,” she says.

He nodding with half-open lids—the dog tugging on the leash.

Into her apartment, looking down on him standing smoking. The dog winding around the trunk of a tree—urinating.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news. To the kitchen, making coffee. Boiling water—hardboiled egg.

From the cooker, rice. Seaweed from the cabinet. Kimchi from the refrigerator.

Unmutes the screen.

News, 7:05 AM

Female Anchor: For more on the deadly police shooting last night, here's Amanda.

Amanda: In the early morning hours, shots were fired here in Anacostia. [cut to image of brick buildings] The story remains cloudy, but it seems that a young man was shot by a plainclothes police officer while resisting arrest. [cut to reporter standing] The officer remains unnamed and has been placed on administrative leave with pay. Witnesses say the officer chased the young man into a crowd and shots were fired. [cut to a young man] “I don't know who was shooting, I just heard shots and people just spread out. Then a cop car comes and the cop jumps in and they drive off.” [cut to reporter standing] Police have issued a statement saying that a gun was found on the scene with empty shell casings. Back to you, Jessica.

Seaweed
wrapping rice.

Standing,
putting away
the
dishes.

Packing her
bag.

To her computer, searching—“Anacostia shooting,” “Anacostia shooting August 5th.”

Makes a note.

Shooting
1410 Stevens Rd SE

Out and up to Connecticut, walking waving. A cab stopping at Columbia.

"Howard and Martin Luther King."

8:12 AM

Coming across to beige buildings. Taking out her camera, her recorder, notebook.

Coughing, pushing against her right ear with her right hand.

A news van—a reporter standing chatting with a camerawoman.

Kyin takes a picture of them.

"Hey," says Kyin. "Any news on the shooting?"

The reporter furrowing his brows. "No, not yet—waiting on a police statement—who're you with?"

"Helen Chang—I'm independent."

"Oh, yes—I've heard of you—did you just take a picture of me?"

"Yes."

"Don't ever do that, ok?"

"Why not?"

"Because I'm a reporter, ok? You just don't do that."

Kyin takes a picture of him.

The reporter walking toward her—Kyin moving back, snapping pictures.

He glares at her, then walks back to the camerawoman.

"Fucking bitch," he says.

The jaw set, Kyin looks over at officers standing behind policetape, orange cones.

She walks to them, standing holding out her recorder, listening.

They work with heads down, quiet. Coming together with hands on hips and holsters—talking low.

Sun bending shadows across the bloodstains. Numbers marking bullet shells.

9:06 AM

Coming across onto Martin Luther King. Into a restaurant.

To the counter—ordering asking, "Is this building new?"

The man leaning across the counter. "Yes, the whole thing around here is new, it's all new."

Nodding Kyin paying.

The man continues. "This whole area is gonna be new soon. They're tearing down and building up. Are you from—you live in the District?"

"Adams Morgan."

The man nodding, spreading his arms, his palms flat on the counter. “Yep, alright. Why’re you over here?”

“The shooting in Barry Farm. I’m writing a story on it.”

The man nodding. “Barry Farms. Another shooting—alright. How old is he this time?”

“I’m not sure. A young man—that’s all I know so far.”

“A young man, of course, they’re always young men, what’s new about that?”

The man looking at Kyin—staring.

A woman from the back bringing food. She hands the food to the man. The man handing the plate to Kyin.

Kyin carrying the plate to a booth, sitting.

The man again leaning over the counter, looking.

“Like I said—what’s new? They coming to tear it all down and build it up. What you see here,” he holds out his arms, “that’s what it’s all gonna look like. Tearing down Barry Farms, Woodland, all of that.”

Eating Kyin nodding.

The man watching her eating.

Staring.

Then nodding and turning, walking back into the kitchen.

Eating Kyin—from her bag, the notebook.

Making a note.

Barry Farm Redevelopment?

Looking through the window, out onto Martin Luther King.

A man walking through the sun.

Cars stopped at the stoplight.

10:16 AM

Barry Farm—standing waiting.

A group of officers leaning against cruisers, talking with folded arms.

The seeping sun. The heat hot, humid.

Kyin walks over to the officers—sweat.

“Hi,” she says, “I’m Helen Chang. I just have a few questions.”

The men glancing—waving her away.

Her holding the recorder—the palm sticky.

“What’s the name of the officer involved in the shooting?”

An officer coming forward. “We’re not releasing that right now, ma’am. He’s on leave.”

“Alright. Were there any witnesses?”

“There was a crowd, but no one saw anything.”

He looks at her—grinning.

“There is that though,” he says—he points.

Kyin turning, looking behind her back.

Above—a metal box, a rectangle.

“What’s that?” she asks.

The smiling man furrowing his brows. “Crime camera,” he says.

Turning to looking at him. “A crime camera?” she asks.

“Yes, ma’am,” he says.

Hipping his hands.

“Ok, I see—thank you,” she says—turning.

Looking back up into the camera eye.

11:12 AM

Green Line to Columbia Heights.

Coming up out of the earth. Exiting the platform, entering the shopping plaza across the street.

Into an electronics store. Down aisles, looking at racks.

A man comes up to her, standing. “Is there something I can help you with?”

Kyin reading the back of a box. “Yeah—which one of these is wireless?”

He points. “Well, several of our models have wireless capability. It depends also on—well, for example, whether you’ll be hooking it up to a computer or a television, for how many hours you’ll want it to record, whether or not you’ll want a camera that is modeled as something else—a stuffed bear, for example, or a clock radio, or a plastic carrying case. Is this for your home?”

Nodding Kyin. “Yes,” she says, “ok—which model has the longest recording time?”

He points. “These five over here.”

“And which ones can I hook up to both my television and computer?”

“Of these? Let’s see—ok, all five.”

She points.

“And that one looks like a—what is that?”

“It’s shaped like a—” he smiles—“a Bible. If put it on your shelf it’ll look just like a Bible sitting there.”

He picks up the camera, flipping through the book.

“In fact,” he says, smiling, “the pages even work.”

Handing the camera to Kyin.

She holds the camera—reading the pages.

In the beginning...

12:45 PM

Coming into the apartment, clicking on the AC. To the kitchen for water cold.

Onto the couch, sitting drinking.

Pressing against her right ear with her right hand.

1:07 PM

Clicks on her computer, carrying it to the couch.

Feet on the table.

Searches—“DC crime cameras,” “DC crime cameras locations,” “Barry Farm,” “Barry Farm DC,” “Barry Farm redevelopment,” “Barry Farm New Communities Initiative,” “Barry Farm BID,” “Barry Farm crime,” “Barry Farm police shooting.”

Searches, reads, refines.

Prints out a labeled map— *DC Police Crime Cameras*.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 2:04 PM

Just came from Anacostia—actually, Barry Farm. The news calls everything over there “Anacostia.” No news on the name of the victim or the shooter. Might go back tonight, try and interview some of the locals. No one is really there right now. It’s pretty quiet. Odd—considering school is out, I thought there’d be more kids running around. A group of cops and a news guy.

Went and ate at a local diner on MLK Ave—good food. This guy who works there, I get the feeling he owns the place, he was real friendly and talkative—sizing me up the whole time. Not the kind of owner—open, curious, friendly, talkative—you would ever see in Dupont. He was talking about how “they” (I’m assuming this is—the Mayor? Business?) are “tearing things down and building things up.” I had a feeling he could talk all day about it, but he suddenly got sidetracked, called into the kitchen. From searching around—it seems they—the DC Government is tearing down Barry Farm and putting in a new development, part of their “New Communities Initiative” (a nice little jargon).

These are both powerful jargons in DC—BIDs, “Business Improvement Districts,” and NCIs, “New Communities Initiatives.” BIDs are essentially special little enclaves for businesses—they create a wonderful place for businesses to live, but not for humans—individuals, citizens. Take a walk down Farragut or the Golden Triangle—there are big buildings with huge sidewalks, shiny windows for consumption. They have nothing to do with people living, rising—with neighborhoods. If you are in a BID, you are either 1) working (in a big glass building), 2) buying something (in a big glass store), or 3) lost.

I don’t know enough about BIDs to write a long essay, but it seems that BIDs clean up parts of the city by pushing out neighborhoods. DC has used BIDs extensively since the 90s to “revitalize” areas—a quick fix.

Megaphone voices coming from the Chinese Embassy—protestors.

Searches—“DC BIDs,” “DC BIDS history,” “DC Business Improvement Districts,” “DC and BIDS relationship,” “New Communities Initiative and BIDs,” “DC surveillance,” “DC Police surveillance cameras,” “DC police street cameras,” “DC police surveillance cameras, crime,” “Homeland Security, DC cameras,” “Homeland Security surveillance cameras,” “surveillance cameras and facial recognition,” “surveillance cameras and biometrics,” “surveillance cameras and voice recognition,” “surveillance cameras and NSA,” “surveillance cameras and NGI.”

Blog, 2:24 PM

The New Communities Initiative is something connected to BIDs, yet separate. It's all very vague and undefined. BIDs and NCIs are, and at the same time are not, private spaces. I'll write more on this after I do some further research.

While I was at the crime scene, I got an officer to talk to me a little—turns out, they're not really waiting for information from the local residents—they don't expect them to talk, because talking is jargonized as "snitching." Instead, the police are getting their information from a "Crime Camera."

I've copied here a map, this is from DC Police's website—they have all cameras listed. On their website they even have live feeds coming from each of these cameras. I really wish I would've known about this earlier. One of the cameras is at Calvert and Connecticut, right where Robert Thompson shot that kid.

Of course, there is debate about these things—most interesting is that many residents in high-crime areas seem to want these cameras. Also, many of the cameras don't work, or they have problems, or they can't get a nice image—it's all blurred. So, really, more than anything, these cameras are supposed to act as a deterrent. Of course, the camera in Barry Farm did nothing to deter the cop from shooting a "young man" this morning.

In addition to the DC Police cameras, Homeland Security has over 6,000 cameras spread around DC. Mostly these cameras are around symbolic areas (monuments, white-columned buildings—I got the term "symbolic area" from Cate), but they're also around Metro stops, parks, places like that. Homeland Security sends the feed to DC Police if they request it.

There aren't enough people to sit and watch these cameras. So, really the cameras serve 2 purposes: 1) deterrence, and 2) after-the-fact analysis. However, tying the cameras to biometrics adds another layer. Cameras with facial/voice recognition can "see." So, there doesn't need to be a person watching the cameras all the time. A computer tied to a biometric database (like the one in Clarksburg, WV), can "see" anyone who is in that database.

I couldn't find the M.I.C.E. in Fairmont, WV. Maybe that's because they just decided to start the FBI's Next Generation Identification (NGI). NGI will be able to tie computer recognition to the way someone walks—each of us has not only a distinct fingerprint, face, voice, etc—but also a distinct way of walking. The computer will "see" someone who walks a certain way and alert police.

Seeing the camera gave me a good idea—I bought one of my own, and I'll try it out. I'm kind of skeptical that it will work that well. And the problem, too, is that I don't have any fancy computer vision technology, so my computer (or television) won't do any "seeing," it'll have to be me. Which could take up some time. But I'll give it shot, why not.

Grabbing a glass of water cold.

Into the bathroom, the medicine cabinet.

Taking out a tiny spoon and sticking it into her ear—scooping out wax.

The street sounds growing louder.

Clicks open chat.

4Humours, 2:55 PM

Anima: Welcome, Choi.

Energy: Hey, Anima.

Darger: Hey, Energy.

Bug: Do we always welcome everyone? Is that like a rule?

Anima: No, not a rule. I just like to.

Energy: Hey all. Did you find a cause, Darger?

Darger: Thinking things over. Need your help.

Bug: Hey, what about me?

Anima: Are you taking any medication, Bug?

Bug: I thought I told you, that's the whole problem. I like my manic phase, but the medication erases all that. It's either I'm up and down, manic then depressed out of my skull, or I take this damn crap and I'm boring all the damn time. It's like I'm not even me! I'm just this damn drugged rat.

Darger: Sounds like a tough choice, Bug. I don't know what it's like to be manic, but being depressed sucks. But, I mean, yeah I know what you mean. I feel like sometimes if I get rid of my depression then I'll be getting rid of who I am.

Energy: Could I ask a question?

Anima: Of course!

Energy: I'm wondering how long you've been depressed or—what is it, bipolar? And what were you like before you became that way?

Bug: Who, me?

Energy: Both of you. Either of you.

Darger: Two years or so. Before, I was one of those boring happy happy kids. Yuck. But being this way sucks too. Oh—what a dilemma! (Sarcasm)

Bug: They diagnosed me about 7 years ago.

ThunkChat, 2:55 PM

3monads: No, I would never characterize myself so rigidly.

Zombie: Who would?

Becomingbeing: ?

Swampman: We're talking about ethics, BB—watch out. Someone who sticks to the same idea, “murder is always wrong”—categorical imperative kinda stuff.

Zombie: I'm saying there probably are some things out there we could all agree are always wrong.

3monads: I think we're getting caught up on the word “wrong.” Can't we use a different word?

Swampman: What, like, “Not culturally acceptable”?

Becomingbeing: just replacing one jargon with another. Ok, I have one—how about rape? I mean, the whole murder thing—I dunno, it's tough—but rape? Rape is always wrong.

Zombie: What are we getting to here? What's the point of this discussion?

3monads: Is there something underlying these wrongs—what don't we like about them?

4Humours, 3:24 PM

Bug: Since then, I've gone off my meds 6 times, and 3 times I've done something. Last time I broke into my Dad's gun cabinet and started shooting at the driveway. I have no idea what I was thinking. I just wanted to shoot things. Before they diagnosed me, who knows, it was so long ago. I was probably the same back then anyway. Why can't they just invent drugs that don't make me a zombie?

Anima: What's the longest you've stayed on your medication? Maybe you just need to give it a chance.

Bug: Ah, who knows, I don't have a choice now anyways, my wife said she'd leave me if I ever go off my meds again, anyway I just came here to vent.

Bug exits

Darger: I think we all come here to vent. What do you wanna vent about, Energy? I'm curious to know if you have any problems. Please enlighten us as to your plight.

Energy: I came here because I was worried about my brother.

Darger: "Came." That's past tense. Why did you come here now. Not your brother, you.

Anima: No pressure.

Darger: Fine, no pressure.

ThunkChat, 3:24 PM

Swampman: Restricting others' freedom.

Becomingbeing: Bingo! Wow, that was good, Swampy. I wouldn't've thought of that answer so quickly.

3monads: Is that it? Does that encapsulate the whole of morality?

Becomingbeing: Yeah, of course that leaves us with the task of defining the jargons "freedom" and "others."

Zombie: And what level of restriction—any?

Swampman: And does it have to be a direct link? For example, people who think going to see a film directed by a director who is a rapist is unethical. So do we have to research each artist to make sure we are free to appreciate their art without condoning their unethical acts? What if we find out that a writer we like used to beat his wife?

Becomingbeing: For some, "others" means animals. Do we define "others" by level of sentience? Or level of pain-awareness? Or are "others" only humans? Of course, then we have to define "human." Is a brain-dead person a human? When does someone become human—at conception?

3monads: I feel like we could have a full-on debate about any one of these questions. What does it mean to restrict someone's freedom?

Becomingbeing: You sound like Vatbrain. Certainly there is a scale. It's one thing to murder someone, it's something wholly other to tell them to shut up because they're annoying.

Swampman: VB can annoy me, but really I like his style. Let's pretend he's here and try and narrow this down a bit.

4Humours, 3:52 PM

Energy: Ok, you win. Sometimes I worry that I am becoming like my brother. Or that I've always been like him and it's latent or something. That I'll end up creating stories that aren't real, and I'll start believing those stories.

Darger: He creates stories?

Anima: Darger, please don't press too hard.

Darger: No pressure, just curious.

Enter Wolfman

Anima: Welcome, Wolfman.

Wolfman: I'm sorry I kept you waiting, baby. Daddy's here now.

Energy: Oh, good. Some comic relief. Just sometimes I notice things I do now that I didn't used to do.

Things that I've seen my brother do. He tells these elaborate crazy paranoid stories, and after a while I start to believe him even though they are just crazy stories.

Anima: Oh, sorry!—I have to go study. Bad timing. Good seeing you, Choi. And you, too, Darger, I hope I can get to know you.

Energy: Bye, Anima. Actually, I'm gonna go too. Darger, I don't want you to think I'm leaving because of you, so if you like I can message you my email address, ok?

Darger: Ok, thanks.

Energy: Ok, Bye, Wolfy, sorry no girls left to bite. You'll have to make do with Darger.

Wolfman: Now I will howl at the moon.

ThunkChat, 3:52 PM

Becomingbeing: Alright, I have a specific example, see if you like it. A while back, I was talking with my friend about candid/street photography—taking pictures without the subject knowing about it. So, today I was thinking about it again. Is it ethical?

Zombie: It's legal.

3monads: I doubt it's legal in every single country. I'd be willing to bet that it's illegal somewhere.

Becomingbeing: If I kill someone and call it art, that doesn't make it a morally sound act. Not all art is inherently ethical, and jargonizing something as "art" certainly doesn't erase moral culpability.

3monads: Taking someone's picture is hardly the same as killing them. I say if they're in a public place, then they are being looked at anyway, right?

Swampman: It doesn't sound the same to me. To be honest, I could care less about the legality of it. Why should I care whether or not it is legal? The more important question is, is it ethical? It skeeves me out that someone would do it.

Zombie: I mean—if it's legal, then what's the point of discussing the ethics of it? What good does it do, right? If you decide it's unethical, you still can't stop me from taking your photograph. I'm acting within the law. In fact, if you try to physically stop me, then you are the one breaking the law.

Becomingbeing: So you're saying that it's pointless to discuss whether or not a law is ethical or not, because it's the law, there's nothing we can do about it. Fuck that. If I think a law is unethical, then I'm not going to follow it. I choose morality over legality.

ThunkChat, 4:05 PM

Swampman: Me, too. So it's not universally acknowledged as "the legal thing to do."

Zombie: It's art. It doesn't hurt anyone. It doesn't restrict their freedom.

3monads: What're you gonna do? Punch the street photographer? You see celebrities do that, they punch a paparazzo—what good does it do them? Momentary relief.

Zombie: What, so everyone gets to decide which laws they want to follow, BB? 'This is a society—we have to learn to live together. That's what the rule of law is all about.

Becomingbeing: Yeahhhhhh, I'm not so sure. I think I would agree with you if, for example, every decision made by the government was made by every citizen. So, for example, say for every vote there was a way to vote online—that way, we, the citizens, are actually deciding the laws instead of some bureaucracy that has lunch with lobbyists and "special interests." Of course, there's no way congress would approve of online voting—it would essentially be voting themselves out of office. Who needs "representatives" if we have online voting for every major decision?

Swampman: That was kind of an off-topic rant, BB. I don't know how I feel about the photography thing. It seems to me to be a misrepresentation to equate it with just being outside sitting, by saying "They're in a public place being looked at." It's one thing to look at someone, it's another thing to take a picture. I mean, come on.

Zombie: What, it's different because you have a lens in front of your face? I don't get it.

Becomingbeing: A picture lasts forever—or, at least a lifetime. It can be shown all over the world, distributed across the internet. It's taking someone who was sitting in a certain place at a certain time and distributing them across all places and all times—doing all that without they themselves having any say in the matter. What if we look closely at their photograph, examining them—is that ok? Or is only ok if we look at them as casually as we would without a camera?

3monads: So what? All it's doing is transferring one public sphere to another. If you go out in public, you're out in public. That's that. The internet just multi-dimensionally extends what it means to be "out in public."

Zombie: Yeah, I think you're being a bit—I don't mean this in a mean way—naive, BB. The local no longer exists. There is no such thing as "local" anymore.

Becomingbeing: Maybe you're right. Does thinking this kind of photography—this act against another individual—is unethical make one a naive, a neo-Luddite? Because if so, that doesn't make sense to me—I'm one of the most technologically oriented people I know, moreso than any of my friends. I just don't think technology is inherently ethically neutral (amoral?). A Luddite only ethically speaking. And now I have to be a jerk and leave after ranting, my ear's killing me, I apologize.

Kyin walking to the AC, turning it to high.

Searches—"ear infection," "earache," "ear pain," "earache remedies," "bone stimulant," "broken hand average healing time."

Searches, reads refines.

To the bathroom, looking through the medicine cabinet.

Dresses, packs her bag—steps into the hallway, down and out into the muggy heat.

5:59 PM

Crossing over to Barry Farm. A group of teens standing.

Taking out her recorder, her camera. "Hello," she says, "I'm a reporter—did anyone see anything this morning?"

A few looking at her, shaking their heads; the others continuing talking, laughing.

Kyin leans against a building brick, begins pushing her ear with her right hand.

Closing her lids.

Opening her lids—a few girls looking at her.

"Are you crazy?" asks one.

"I have an earache," says Kyin.

"And I think I'm getting a headache."

Wiping her forehead with her forearm.

Then standing, gazing at the waning sun.

6:44 PM

Coming from Columbia Heights, stopping in a CVS.

Down the aisles, looking at the racks.

Buying aspirin, a heating pad, hydrogen peroxide, an ear wash, Nyquil.

Down Columbia Avenue to home.

7:39 PM

Cotton ball in her ear, she answers the knock.

Cate standing. "Hello—am I bothering you?"

"Hey, Cate—no, I just have some sort of who-knows-what, an earache or flu or something.

I'm just gonna lay for a while with a heating pad then go to bed. What are you up to?"

Cate fierce gripping her hand to her other hand. "Oh, nothing, just seeing if you wanted to go out. I hope you feel better, though."

"I'll be fine," says Kyin. "I just need to let my body chill. Maybe we can go out this weekend—hopefully it'll be gone by then."

Cate nodding. "Ok," she says. "Be good to yourself."

8:03 PM

On the couch, holding the heating pad under her ear.

Looking at the painting on the wall.

8:45 PM

Yet looking at the grid—points and lines—Kyin stands to the knocked door.

Cate standing holding a plastic bag. "I hope I didn't wake you, I just wanted to get you some—" she holds open the bag, "Orange juice and flu medicine, and also I got you some coughdrops just in case, and—" holding up a can, "this soup is really the best, it always helps me."

Leaning Kyin looking into the bag.

Then back up at Cate. "You didn't have to do all that, you know. I'll be fine, ok? I just need to lie down and—thank you, though."

"Ok," says Cate, handing Kyin the bag, smiling.

"Ok, goodnight," says Kyin, closing the door.

Looking into the bag. Putting away the groceries.

Back on the couch, the heating pad.

Looking at the painting—the arcs, circles, rectangles.

Dozing.

Friday, August 14th

Sunny, humid, 93°

6:24 PM

Coming into *Crime*—fast grabbing a table by the window.

Kyin and Cate drinking as Fiela pushes through, Tisha behind.

Introductions and drink orders.

8:34 PM

Drinks, the crowd accumulating.

Fiela yelling.

Kyin shakes her head, "Let's go," she says—touching her lobe.

Fiela leaning, grabbing Kyin's upper arm. "What's wrong?"

"My damn ear," says Kyin.

Fiela screwing her eyes, squinting.

8:46 PM

They pay and exit.

Fiela and Kyin walking in front. "You're still sick?"

"No, just my ear won't work yet. It'll be fine—I just need to rest it. The doctor gave me some antibiotics."

Fiela shaking her head—clicking heels.

"Let's go back to our place," she says, looking back at Tisha.

"Hey," says Cate, "Why don't you come see my apartment? It's right across from Kyin's."

Tisha then Fiela shrugging.

9:14 PM

Coming into Cate's apartment.

Fiela in front. "This is nice," she says.

Tisha next. "Do you have a bathroom?" she asks.

Cate pointing. "Down the hall."

Kyin looking, moving around.

The bookcases filled with novels, DVDs, biographies.

A single computer on a bare desk.

Cate in the kitchen making drinks.

10:44 PM

Cate sitting on the floor next to Kyin on the couch next to Tisha.

Fiela drinking in the chair leathered. "I forget what you do," says Fiela, looking at Cate.

"Just a boring government computer job. How about you?"

"I am a loy-uh."

"Not yet," says Tisha.

Fiela drinking. "No, not yet. But soon. I took my time getting my degree."

"What kind of law?"

Leaning placing her drink on the table. "Immigration law. Where I work now, though, working for my bosses, I do mostly tax law."

"Immigration law—so, you get people green cards?"

Fiela leaning, picking up her drink. "I'll be doing all of that stuff, yes. Helping illegals, helping rich dudes, helping students. But the green card, that's actually mostly the last—" she points, asks, "What's in those boxes?"

The group turning, following her pointing. A stack of boxes in the kitchen.

Cate drinking. "I'm just rearranging the apartment, moving books around."

Tisha standing, "Oh, can I look? Are you getting rid of these?"

Cate standing, blocking. "Oh, no, just—they're my boring computer programming books and old math textbooks. Boring stuff."

Tisha sitting. "Oh, ok."

1:44 AM

Fiela and Tisha taking a cab. Cate asleep in the bedroom.

Kyin in the kitchen, opening the boxes. Books on cryptography and biometrics.

Leaving the apartment, the door ajar.

Into her apartment, grabbing a camera, a box.

Back into Cate's apartment, closing the door softly.

Cate moaning.

Kyin taking pictures of the apartment, the books.

Then opening the box—unpacking the video-camera. Turning it on.

Climbing onto the counter, reaching and placing the video-camera on top of the cabinets.

Quick padding to her apartment, sitting at her computer.

Typing in a password. Then clicking open the camera-video—a live feed of Cate's apartment, the shot capturing the main room and part of the kitchen.

Walking again back to Cate's—waving to the camera, then turning off the lights, locking and pulling the door shut as she exits.

At her desk, she rewinds the feed, watching herself waving. Stops and zooms in, refining the image.

Then returns to the live feed, tilting and panning the lens.

Monday, August 17th

Sunny, 89°

9:07 AM

Sipping coffee, sitting on the couch. Grabbing her cell, she places a call.

Cell, 9:16 AM

MCPD: Montgomery County Police, this is Janice, how may I direct your call?

Kyin: Hi, my name is Kyin Choi, my mother and I filed a missing persons report a couple weeks ago. I'm just wondering if I can talk to the officer in charge of the case and see if there's anything going on.

MCPD: Just a moment. What was your name again?

Kyin: My last name is Choi, C-H-O-I, and my first name is Kyin, K-Y-I-N. My mother and I both came in.

MCPD: Ok, I'm gonna put you on hold, just a second please ma'am.

MCPD: Ma'am?

Kyin: Yes, I'm here.

MCPD: Ok, sorry about that ma'am. Your case officer is Officer Gutiérrez. I'll transfer you to him now.

Off.Gut: Hello, Ms. Choi?

Kyin: Yes, I'm here. Hello.

Off.Gut: Ok, so you are the sister of—Ian, is it?

Kyin: Ian, yes. I'm his sister.

Off.Gut: Ok, good. So I have here that your brother went missing on June 21st—is that correct?

Kyin: Yes.

Off.Gut: And he—and you and your mother—may I ask why you waited over a month to report your brother as missing?

Kyin: Ian usually contacts me only once a month or so. He calls Mom more often, so she was worried and wanted to go to the police, but I wasn't really worried until it was, until a month had passed.

Off.Gut: Ok, so—has he gone missing before, your brother?

Kyin: Yes. Once when he was a teenager, he went away for almost 2 years. And then when he came back, that's when I only started seeing him once every month. Or, no, I don't always see him, sometimes he'll just call or email me. Sometimes it'll be every day for a week, then nothing for a whole month. But a month is—used to be the limit, before this.

Off.Gut: Ok. Did you, did he explain where he was for those 2 years? When he was—how old was he exactly?

Kyin: He was—I was around 13, so he must've been 17 or so. He said he went to Korea, but we didn't know what to believe. We're Korean, by the way.

Off.Gut: Ok. And does Ian have a history of mental illness?

Kyin: He—well, ok, I may as well just tell you. He's been told by doctors that he was mentally ill, and they wanted to keep him hospitalized, but I sort of went in there and screamed at them.

Cell, 9:42 AM

Kyin: So, no, I don't think he's mentally ill, but if you ask the doctors, they might disagree. I realize that's probably too long of an answer, but I just don't feel comfortable giving you a yes or no response.

Off.Gut: Ok, no, we—the more information we have the better, Ms. Choi. I appreciate your honesty, I know this is difficult. Ok, so I have here that his last location was in the District, correct?

Kyin: Correct. We had breakfast together in Dupont Circle.

Off.Gut: And he was wearing a—a navy suit, is that correct?

Kyin: Yes, a navy suit with sneakers, yes. And a leather bag.

Off.Gut: Ok, good. What I want to do next, Ms. Choi, is suggest that we put your brother in the FBI-NCIC CODIS database. What that is, really, is a national database of missing persons' DNA. And what that will do is allow us to use the FBI to put your brother's DNA on record, giving us a better chance of finding him. Do you have something with your brother's DNA on it?

Kyin: Wait, what is this called?

Off.Gut: CODIS, C-O-D-I-S, it's short for Combined DNA Index System, and the FBI now has a missing persons DNA database, also called NMPDD. It's a very useful tool and has helped find many missing persons.

Kyin: Ok. I'm sure my mom has something. You mean a piece of hair or something?

Off.Gut: Yes, that would work. Maybe a piece of gum, something like that. And if you can't find anything, either you or your mother could provide a sample, and that would allow the FBI to find DNA that has a similar makeup to the sample you provide. Your mother would be better.

Kyin: Ok. So when should we come in?

Off.Gut: You can come in almost any time during the week. I'm usually here, but if I'm not, they'll send you to a lab technician. Ok?

Kyin: Ok, thank you.

Off.Gut: Alright, take care.

Searches—
“CODIS FBI,”
“CODIS
DNA,”
“CODIS
missing
persons,”
“FBI-NCIC,”
“FBI
NMPDD.”
Searches,
reads,
refines.

Pulling the phone away, pressing against her ear with her right hand.

Carrying her computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 9:29 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

I haven't seen you in chat in a while. Where've you been? You should stop by.

Sincerely,

Darger

Birds and cars—horns honking, crows cawing.

Email Outbox, 9:31 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

Have you found a cause yet?

Energy

Email Outbox, 10:01 AM

To: Mom

Mom,

I just called the detective in charge of Ian's case. He wants us to bring in a DNA sample. See if you can find something from Ian—his hair or something like that. Otherwise they'll have to take a sample from us. I'll come up on Sunday.

Kyin

Stretching standing. Undressing then dressing in shorts, a tanktop, sneakers.

Grabs her keys and runs out.

Jogging up 20th Street, across Duke Ellington Bridge, back across Taft Bridge, down into Kalorama, then back across Connecticut to home.

Up into her apartment.

Into the kitchen drinking water cold.

Sitting on the couch, legs on the table. Pushing her ear.

11:06 AM

Showering, drying, dressing.

Packing her bag.

Out and up to Connecticut—down to Florida, grabbing a cab.

Up to Michigan, to Quincy.

12:14 AM

Coming up the hill, Kyin stops at Officer Robert Thompson's house.

The driveway empty.

She turns a slow circle, looking at each of the neighboring houses.

The street empty, quiet.

Onto the lawn, moving around the back of the house. Looking behind herself, turning.

Then standing on her toes, looking into the house.

Again looking behind herself, turning.

Then walking onto the back porch, through the door—into the house.

Quiet, she moves through the rooms. The kitchen, the living room, the bathroom.

Upstairs—a bedroom, a hallway, another bedroom. Looking out the window—the street quiet, sun hitting against the green of a tree.

Downstairs, she grabs a stool, standing and placing the video-camera on top of a book case. Then stepping down and looking at the lens, waving.

Then exiting the house.

1:56 PM

Into the apartment, turning on the AC. To the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on her computer, clicking open the camera feed. Rewinds to the image of herself waving—zooms in, refines.

Then returns to the live feed, panning, tilting.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 2:12 PM

I now have one camera in Cate's place and another in Officer Robert Thompson's house. I plan on visiting my mom this weekend, and if possible putting a camera in Officer Patrick Walker's place. I would also like to put one in Sabine's, but I don't think I could get into the building or her apartment. I'll try and come up with something.

Oh yeah, I forgot—in a tiny little article in the back of the local section, they finally printed the name of the cop involved in that Barry Farm shooting. His name is Officer Jason Green, and his address is 1656 Longfellow Street NW, pretty much straight up from Fiela and Tisha.

Blog, 2:20 PM

Called MCPD this morning about Ian. The officer there was very nice, helpful. They want a DNA sample from Ian so they can put him into a DNA database. This is the FBI NCIC CODIS NMPDD. So, while in the cab today, riding up to Brookland, I realized that if he is in the database, then I am kind of in the database. When the officer was asking me for a DNA sample, he said, "Or your mom or you can bring one, and we can identify him that way." That means, effectively, if one of us is in the database, then all of us are in the database.

I was also thinking on the ride home that maybe I should be a bit more careful. Maybe I should be wearing gloves when I put in those cameras, or something. At first I thought that that would be a bit much, a little too overprotective, but I guess it can't hurt—"justified caution."

My ear still feels weird.

Clicks open Cate's camera—panning, tilting.
Staring at the screen.

Friday, August 21st

Mostly cloudy, humid, 92°

11:20 PM

On the couch sitting drinking—Kyin and Cate.

Cate with glassy eyes. "But you grew up here, right?"

Kyin looking at her glass, the drink. "Around here, yes. Moved here when I was a kid."

"A kid? So you're basically American."

"Not quite," says Kyin.

Legs shifting out from under her bottom. Standing walking to the kitchen, asking, "What do you do for vacation? See your parents?"

Cate following behind. "They usually come in the Winter. They like touring around the city."

Kyin pouring drinks. "What about—don't you have a place in—what was it, West Virginia?"

Cate swallowing, looking down. "Oh—no, Virginia. Harrisonburg."

Kyin touching her arm. "How often do you go down there?"

Cate red, drinking. "In the fall, usually."

"It's boring," she says.

1:39 AM

On the couch sitting drinking—Kyin and Cate.

"Is your family from Harrisonburg?"

Cate grinning. "They would never go down there," she says. "They would hate it."

"Then—is it for work?"

Cate nodding drinking spilling. "Yes," she says.

"It's not—my place is in Harrisonburg, but I work in Sugar Grove—in West Virginia."

Drinking smiling looking at Kyin.

"It's the middle of nowhere—in the mountains," says Cate.

"It's beautiful," she says.

2:26 AM

Cate sleeping moaning.

Kyin looking through the boxes of books.

Checking the camera.

2:56 AM

Into her apartment, to water cold.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Searches—"Sugar Grove, West Virginia," "Sugar Grove, WV and NSA," "Sugar Grove, WV and SIGINT," "ECHELON," "Sugar Grove, WV and ECHELON," "Sugar Grove, WV and FBI,"

"Sugar Grove, WV and biometrics," "Sugar Grove, WV and CJIS," "Sugar Grove, WV and

Homeland Security," "Sugar Grove, WV and radio telescopes," "Sugar Grove, WV and

cellphones," "Sugar Grove, WV and radio quiet zone," "Sugar Grove, WV and listening."

To the kitchen for water cold—Excedrin swallowed.

Searches, reads, refines.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 5:10 AM

I feel like my head is gonna explode. I stayed up all night drinking with Cate—that wine she drinks is nasty—throbbing head. I’ve been reading online, searching for 2 hours, looking for information about Sugar Grove, West Virginia. First of all, I feel like an idiot for not finding out about this earlier. It seems like it is common knowledge, or at least something I should’ve figured out by now. Regardless, Cate got drunk and I kept asking her about Harrisonburg. Something about the way she acted—when I asked her about it before, she would get all weird—looking down, or looking away, or her skin would pale, so I asked her a couple times tonight, and when she got drunk enough she said, “No, I just have a place in Harrisonburg, I work in Sugar Grove.”

Ok, I thought, she works for the NSA, so now I know that Sugar Grove is connected to the NSA. And Cate does something down there. Cate, who seems to be an expert in biometrics and cryptography.

Searching around, it seems like Sugar Grove is a kindof—Navy Base? Or something like that. But it’s main thing is that it houses ECHELON, which is this massive listening device used by the NSA. Rather, it’s not one device but all these radio telescopes, dishes. So they are up in the mountains, away from interference, just listening to the entire East Coast (and other countries).

Other than that—just like everything else with the NSA—it’s a black box. I kind of get the feeling that the Navy is there just to kind of help out the NSA. But, again, that’s the problem—I just spent 2 hours looking around, and there’s basically nothing—it’s like this gaping hole, this massive information gap. Cate goes down the rabbit hole, but I don’t have the security clearance.

There’re even two government websites about Sugar Grove that when you visit them they have this pop-up warning you that because you are visiting the site they are allowed to track you. So, it’s the sort of thing where anything said about Sugar Grove ends up being speculation.

What I need to figure out is which speculations have a greater probability of being likely. Which is why I need to more closely monitor Cate.

Ok—headache. Bedtime.

Clicking off her computer; carrying it to her desk.

To the couch.

Dozing becomes sleeping.

Monday, August 24th

Sunny, humid, 95°

12:12 PM

Computer on the couch.

Searches—"tracking devices," "GPS tracking devices," "satellite tracking," "tracking devices time limit," "tracking devices range" "cell phone tracking."

Orders several tracking devices.

To the kitchen for water cold. Hitting the AC.

Down and out, up to Columbia. Into *Kimhap*.

Orders several rolls with various fillings—kimchi, tuna, radish, crab, cucumber, eggs. A bottle of water flavored.

Cash from her pocket, paying the young girl smiling behind the counter.

Smiling Kyin.

Back to the apartment, sitting eating clicking open her blog.

Blog, 1:40 PM

Went up to Mom's, looked for a DNA sample. For Ian. Didn't find much of anything. She's going today or tomorrow to the MCPD—so, then, Ian will officially be in the database, which means that Mom and I will be in there too.

I sat for half the day, then later that night outside Patrick Walker's house, but there's no way I could get in there. He has kids and a wife, and they're always there or doing stuff. Plus, it's in this townhouse development with neighbors everywhere. So it's not an option putting a camera in there.

So I ordered some tracking devices. They don't seem to last forever, from what I can find, so what I'll do is just set it up to notify me if he goes up to Gettysburg again. My gut tells me that that is where I want to be watching him.

I ordered a couple extra tracking devices as well. Different kinds, in case I want to put them on Sabine or Robert Thompson or Jason Green (the Barry Farm cop).

Going up to Jason Green's place today, see what it's like. According to the map, he's right next to Rock Creek Park.

Mom convinced me to see an ENT specialist about my ear, so I'm setting up an appointment for this week sometime. She was right about my hand, so I have to give her credit.

Here are the logs for Cate and Robert Thompson. The cameras do not have sound.

Blog, 1:58 PM

Cate

August 17-21 (weekdays): Cate wakes around 5:00 AM each morning. Straight to the kitchen, starting boiling a teapot. Turning on the computer. To the shower. Coming out, drying off. Into the bedroom.

5:25-35 AM

Into the kitchen, making a cup of tea. Into the living room, checking the computer. To the NSA secure website. Password is 2bx456cw875. Once on the website, she navigates to the Cryptologic Division. Takes notes, writing on the pad on her desktop. Something about this website—not sure if it’s the actual NSA website or just a sort of “sister” site, something she can access off campus.

5:55-6:10 AM

Takes the notes and puts them into a folder, putting the folder in an envelope in a bag.

Takes her briefcase, the brown bag, and exits the apartment. 6:00-7:30 PM

Returns home, placing her briefcase on the desk.

To the kitchen, starting the teapot. To the bedroom.

Comes out of the bedroom, changed. Clicks on the television—most always a reality show, but sometimes a detective show.

Makes a cup of tea (Note: sometimes she drinks alcohol instead of tea). While she is watching the television show, she logs onto the NSA website.

To the Cryptologic Division. The computer screen is difficult to see from the couch.

Sometimes I am able to zoom in on the screen’s reflection in the window, but the image is rarely clear enough to make anything out.

7:30-8:00 PM

To the kitchen making dinner, or ordering from a restaurant. A different Asian food each night—Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese

8:00-10:00 PM

Watching a television show, eating. Finished eating, she moves to her desk. Often searches around online—shopping, travel, reading news—just general web-surfing.

10:00-11:20 PM

Switches to news on the television. 3 nights called her mother (I could see her mouth the word, “Mom.”), talking for 20 minutes. Around 11, she usually goes to bed, turning off all the lights.

August 22, 23 (weekends):

Cate spends most of her time out of the apartment. On Saturday, she sleeps in (she and I stayed up drinking Friday night into the morning). On Sunday, wakes early and goes jogging. Comes back and showers, has a cup of tea, fruit, and watches a television show (again, usually a reality program). Then packs a bag and leaves the apartment.

She comes home around 7 PM. Makes a salad, a sandwich, then has a cup of tea. Watches a reality television show. To bed by 9 PM.

Blog, 2:26 PM

Robert Thompson

August 17-21 (weekdays)

The camera is in the main room of the house. It has a view of the stairway, a little bit of the kitchen, and out onto the front porch.

Robert wakes very early, probably around 4 AM. He is married, and his wife sleeps in until he is gone for work.

He comes downstairs dressed for work and looking showered around 4:25 AM and goes straight into the kitchen.

In the kitchen, he makes coffee. He goes to the porch and grabs the newspaper. He then comes out to the living room and puts on his shoes, begins reading the paper.

Once the coffee is made, he pours half of the carafe into a travel mug. Then, mug in hand, exits the house.

Robert does not have any children (at least, none that live with him).

7:00-8:00 PM

Robert's time coming home varies up to an hour. By the time he is home, his wife has dinner prepared. They sit in the kitchen and talk and eat. His wife's name is Kerry (mouthing "Kerry."). Twice, a neighbor comes by, one of Robert's friends—and once, another neighbor, one of Kerry's friends. Robert's friend and he go out to the porch and talk, sitting with beer.

9:00-10: PM

Robert and Kerry usually watch a television program, usually a detective show or game show. At 10, they go to bed.

August 22, 23 (weekends)

On both days,. Robert slept in until around 11:00 AM. On Sunday, the two dressed in dress-clothes and left (I'm assuming to Church, but not certain). On Saturday, they ate breakfast in the kitchen. Kerry called her mother (mouthing, "Mom") and talked for almost an hour. Robert watched television.

1:00-2:00 PM

On both days, the two dressed in summer clothes and went outside.

4:30-9:00 PM

They came home, had dinner, and watched television. Around 10:00 PM on Saturday and around 9:00 PM on Sunday, they went to bed.

This is probably the only time I'll record the full logs here. From now on, I'll mention only that which seems significant.

3:00 PM

Carrying her computer to the desk. Packing her bag.

Out and down—then up to Columbia.

At 18th Street, Kyin climbs into a cab.

“Longfellow and 14th Street.”

3:16 PM

Coming down Longfellow toward Rock Creek Park. Houses lining a quiet street, coming up against a green field.

Taking out her notepad. Turning a slow circle, looking behind herself, again in front.

Then putting on gloves and walking into 1656 Longfellow.

Inside, she stands, waits.

Says, “Hello?”

Then again—louder, “Hello!”

The house quiet, Kyin walks through the downstairs rooms—kitchen, living, bedroom, bathroom.

The upstairs—bedroom, study, bedroom. An infant’s room—a crib, stuffed animals.

She leaning to look out on the quiet street. Then walking into the study. Looking through the desk drawers—bills, envelopes, lists, pay stubs.

The name on the paystub—“Jason Green.”

Down to the living room, turning a slow circle.

Surrounding the television—stacks and rows of DVDs and VHS tapes. From her bag, she takes out the camera shaped as a VHS case—sliding it among the others. Then steps back, looking at the lens—waving.

4:34 PM

Coming down Longfellow onto 14th Street. Stopping at the intersection of 14th, Kennedy, and Colorado—a café.

On the streetlight above—a DC Police surveillance camera.

4:56 PM

Sitting sipping a flat white, clicking open her blog.

A van moving across Kennedy.

The 54-bus, cabs, a car coming up 14th Street.

Blog, 4:56 PM

I've tested Jason Green's camera, and it seems to be working fine. Because it's in a bookcase, it doesn't have as nice a wide-perspective as Robert Thompson's—but I think it'll do.

I've been thinking about something.

Setting up an Ethical Scale. One could say that every act is an ethical act.

Every action implies an ethical decision—whether implicit or explicit.

Whether it is a conscious thought or a gut feeling. Sitting alone in a room breathing, however, seems to have very little ethical impact. So—set up an:

Ethical Impact Scale (EIS)

Ethical Impact Scale (EIS)

Positive (Good)

2

1

0

-1

-2



Negative (Bad)

Looking at someone is an ethical act, but I wouldn't say that looking in-and-of-itself is either good or bad. If I am looking at someone dying and I am not doing anything, only then does that act of looking itself become bad.

I am not helping them—I am just sitting watching them die—a “bad” act.

When I use the jargons “good” and “bad” I am talking about Ethical Impact. An act with an Ethical Impact of zero is an act that is neither good nor bad.

Sipping flat white
from a mug.

The grinding of the
54-bus coming down
14th Street.

Watching a man
walking down
Colorado.

Blog, 5:17 PM

It is debatable whether or not such a “0-impact” act exists. I would say that even if one is “simply living,” that in-and-of-itself has a rating higher than zero. To be alive is ethically “good”, taking nothing else into consideration (though Malthusians might disagree).

Bad acts have a negative value on the Ethical Impact Scale; good acts have a positive value.

In my estimation, an infant sitting smiling has a positive value. However, I can see how some could argue that it has no value. For those who believe the world to be overpopulated, the question becomes more complicated. Was the baby born to rich parents? Poor parents? In what part of the world?

Again, to my mind, an infant smiling, even taking all of these factors into consideration—that simple act will always have a positive value. I am not saying that I would rate it an extremely high positive value—yet it is positive nonetheless.

Looking. Sitting looking at someone walk down the street, in and of itself, to my mind has a neutral value. That value changes immediately once I take into consideration who is doing the looking and who is being looked at; that is, once context is taken consideration, it is difficult to maintain a neutral value. What I am not saying is that the value will change dramatically—most likely it will move only slightly up or down the Ethical Impact Scale.

For example, right now, I am a Korean-American, I don’t have tons of money, but enough to get by. I am drinking a flat white in a café. Walking down Colorado Avenue is an African-American, looking around 50 years old, strolling. That is all. I have no way of knowing how much money he makes or has saved up or what he does for a living. He is dressed in regular clothes—jeans, boots, a ball-cap, and a plaid button-up.

Blog, 5:35 PM

To my mind, this act of looking, including this second-act of writing this all down, has a very low Ethical Impact Rating. I rate this as a positive act (or maybe neutral), because I am acknowledging his existence, I am thinking about him, and I am thinking *about* my thinking about him.

So, to my mind, reflecting on one's actions always slightly raises the positive Ethical Impact Rating. I am not ignoring him or sneering at him. I am simply looking.

On to the next example—looking with a camera. Suddenly the movement along the EIS becomes more than slight. Not necessarily large jumps up and down the scale, but yet more dynamic than those looking-at acts that take place without a camera.

I want to emphasize that this act has a very slight positive rating, almost negligible—neutral. It would gain a very slight negative rating if, for example, I thought, “Those are the worst clothes ever and he looks smelly.” It would not harm him if I thought those thoughts, and that would be it—a brief thought. Someone asks me to take a picture of themselves—in and of itself, a low positive EIS rating. If, however, that someone is a Dictator, and they are paying me to use that photograph for the purpose of propaganda—suddenly that act gains a very negative EIS rating. The photograph becomes a means for dissemination, for propagating that Dictator's perspective (Leni Reifenstahl).

So, immediately, the act of taking a photograph is bound hand and foot to its potential transference across mediums. A photograph is always potentially publishable within many different mediums—an Art museum, a newspaper, a pamphlet, a film, a music video, a blog, etc. The EIS rating of every photograph, therefore, must take into account that photograph's dissemination potential.

Dissemination means, then, that an individual photograph is always without context. A photograph is an event stripped of its background. I am not saying that there is a direct connection between the EIS rating and where that photograph is published—but there *is* some kind connection, even if it is not directly causal.

A grandmother takes a picture of her granddaughter, aged 5—nude. Her intent—she loves her granddaughter. The EIS rating, initially, is very high—a positive picture. To save time, that grandmother emails the photograph to all of the contacts in her email list—her family, her friends, her neighbors, and other random people. One of her neighbors likes the picture and puts it up on her website, a website devoted to “Cute Children.” The image is then taken from that website and used by a pervert sicko. Suddenly—within a few days—the EIS rating of the grandmother's act veers negative.

It is not, however, clear where the grandmother's EIS rating stands—especially if she never finds out about where the picture ended up (which is most likely). To my mind, no matter the grandmother's intent, that photographic act can no longer hold a high EIS rating.

Blog, 6:05 PM

The dissemination potential(DP), then, always dramatically alters the EIS rating.

(EIS rating)(DP)=

(Ethical Impact Scale Rating)(Dissemination Potential) =?

A photograph always has a higher “dissemination potential” than a simple act of looking. Therefore, a photographic act will always have a much higher or much lower “ethical rating.”

Looking at someone in pain can have a little, or even negative, rating. But photographing that person, bringing their pain to the attention of others, can have a high ethical rating. Or, it can have a low rating, if that photograph is used for sinister purposes (Abu Ghraib).

Harming someone else is bad; but photographing yourself harming someone else is much worse.

To be more clear about it: whether or not an act is ethical is dependent upon historical/social context.

A photograph, however, is *always without fixed context*. A photograph’s ethical standing, then, is ever in flux, ever shaped by the context of the moment (is it in a newspaper article? a personal email? a home album? a propaganda poster?).

But the grandmother holds the position of someone unaware of the dissemination potential (DP). We can compare this with, for example, a photojournalist. A photojournalist, by definition, is always aware of the highest DP.

That is to say, a photograph taken by a photojournalist is made with the intent to be disseminated as widely as possible. The act of a photojournalist taking a picture of a nude 10-year old, needless to say, has a very negative EIS rating.

But, of course, there are such pictures that we would rate high on the EIS scale—e.g., Kim Phuc in Vietnam running from fire bombs (“Too hot!”)—what’s the rating on that photograph?

They snap and snap and snap—rapid fire. Their moral appraisal occurs only after the picture has been taken—a photojournalist’s EIS rating of a particular photograph can only ever be a post-hoc rationalization.

Often, however, a moral appraisal of the photojournalist’s act never occurs—it is forever deferred. The photographer takes the picture based upon trained impulse.

Blog, 6:19 PM

Then they let their editor decide whether or not publishing the picture is ethical. A photojournalist does not operate with conscious intent. The photographer and camera are one; taking a picture, then, becomes an act of intuition, a gut feeling, a trained impulse. Any ethical analysis of that act, then, can only occur after the fact. Photojournalists do not make a conscious moral decision when photographing. The photographer then hands the photograph to the publisher, passing the job of moral appraisal to the publisher. The EIS rating of the photograph is never taken into account.

So, of course I'm thinking about all this because of this, my project...

6:22 PM

Across to Georgia—picking up a cab.

6:37 PM

Coming into the apartment, clicking on the AC. To the kitchen for water cold.

Ordering from *Kongming's*—steamed vegetables, brown rice, miso.

7:03 PM

Sitting eating clicking on the television.

Commentary show, 7:03 PM

Host: Our topic: North Korea has again launched an attack against the South. Fred, does this tell us anything? Why are they doing this? Should we be worried? Or is it all for show?

Fred: It's attention-grabbing, plain and simple. North Korea is a whiny little kid saying, "Paying attention to me, Mr. United States!" They kick and scream and then they go take nap.

Host: Is that true, Craig? Or are they waiting to pounce? What if we ignore them, will that just make them more angry? What about the South Koreans—would it be failing our allies if we just ignored the North?

Sipping miso.

Craig: First of all, South Korea can handle themselves. In fact, we should let them. I'd be willing to bet that most South Koreans aren't spending their nights worried about North Korea bombing them. Sure, there are protests, but that's not the majority or citizens. For us, though, the US, because they are our allies, yes, we're obligated to make a statement—which is just what North Korea wants.

Host: But why do they want that? What good does it do them? Fred?

Fred: No, but—I mean, for one thing, it keeps the populace brainwashed. Really, these bombs and attacks are more for internal politics than they are for our benefit. It's the same reason Iran wants the bomb. It's not for us that they want it; it's for themselves. They can show a clip of our President or the UN Secretary—who, of course, is a South Korean—saying, "Don't do that North Korea, that's bad!" Then they say to their citizens, "See, the world hates us! They're out to get us! But we will stand strong!"

Host: What about it Craig? Are most North Korean citizens brainwashed? Or is that just speculation? And if they are brainwashed, how would we know that?

Craig: If brainwashed means they don't love the US and they love their own country, well, according to that standard, a lot of people across the globe are brainwashed. "Brainwashed" is a meaningless term that smacks of ethnocentrism. Every citizen of every country is brainwashed, in that sense of the word. I mean, this isn't the Manchurian Candidate we're talking about. Number one, we don't know—how many actual North Korean citizens have we spoken to—maybe five-thousand total in almost sixty years? If that. I just can't accept that it's that black and white. I know it's tempting to think of North Korea as a kind of National Cult, following the Dear Leader, but I'm much more inclined to think that most North Korean citizens are more concerned with the day-to-day aspects of living than with any of that political nonsense.

Host: Fred?

Fred: For one thing—I don't think the Secretary General will be saying anything. All he cares about is global warming, and he's proven himself incapable of confronting North Korea. And I think that's very unfortunate. Here there is a rare opportunity for a South Korean serving as the UN Secretary General—a bully pulpit—and he's not doing anything.

Chopsticks
picking broccoli
and carrots, the
rice brown.

Clicking off the
television.

Placing the containers on the table.

Slowly reaching into her pocket and pulling out a stone—a black one-inch square.

She holds it up to her right eye, closing her left.

Looking down at the stone resting in her open palm.

Friday, August 28th

Cloudy, humid, 87°

1:20 PM

Coming up out of Farragut North. Down to K Street, across and up into a glass building.

1:50 PM

Kyin places headphones over her ears.

The doctor pointing to the screen.

“Just tell me when you hear a sound, and whether it is in your left ear, your right ear, or both. Press the button in your right hand if you hear a sound in your right ear, the left button for your left ear, or both buttons for both ears, ok? Got it?”

Kyin nodding.

The doctor runs the test.

2:06 PM

The doctor walking to Kyin, pulling a tuning fork from his pocket.

“Ok, Kyin. What I’m going to do now is hold this tuning fork next to each ear, ok? And just—if you hear something, just let me know, ok? Got it?”

Kyin nodding.

He hits the tuning fork, holding it behind the left side of her head.

“I hear it,” says Kyin.

He hits the tuning fork, holding it behind the right side of her head.

Waiting.

“Ok,” he says, “What we’re going to do next is called a tympanometry test. For this one, you don’t have to do anything.”

He bends, looking through an otoscope—into her right ear.

Then leans back, turning and grabbing a device from the table.

Holding the device up to Kyin.

“Ok, now all this little thing does is measure the pressure in your ear. It will feel a little uncomfortable, but it shouldn’t be too bad, ok? So, I’ll put this little thing into your ear, and all you have to do is try not to swallow or talk, ok? Got it?”

Kyin nodding.

The doctor runs the test.

2:31 PM

The doctor sitting across from Kyin.

“Ok, so—it says here that you’ve had this problem with your ear for about three weeks. Is that right?”

“Yes—that sounds right.”

Looking at Kyin. “And it was what—what did it feel like, did you feel anything?”

“It felt like an earache, I guess. Just like a normal earache—and then it went away, but I still couldn’t hear.”

“Ok. And you never went to a doctor?”

“No. I just thought it would come back.”

The doctor nodding. “Ok, got it. Well—Kyin, it seems that you do have hearing loss in your right ear, almost—almost total loss of hearing. So—what I’d like to do is make sure that there isn’t some underlying cause. Ok, so we’ll send you over to my colleague down the hall, Dr. Kadam, and what he’ll do is—he’ll do an MRI test on you, just to make sure that there isn’t a tumor, ok? Got it? Then what we’ll do is put you on some steroids, ok?”

“Steroids?”

The doctor nodding. “Yes. So—Kyin, I have to tell you, ok, that sudden hearing loss, when it does occur, if it heals itself it usually does so within the first week or so. We’ll try to get somewhere with steroids, and have you come back in a month or so, ok?”

“I’m—ok, I’m confused—so my ear is deaf? I mean. This is permanent?”

“I want to try putting you on steroids for a bit. And until we see how that works out, we just won’t know whether this is permanent or not.”

Nodding Kyin.

“Ok,” she says.

Biting her cheek.

5:16 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the AC—to the kitchen for water cold.

Placing the medication on the counter.

To the couch, clicking open chat.

Clicking open her email.

4Humours, 5:23 PM

Anima: Hey, Choi.

Energy: Hey, Anima.

Anima: No one is here but me, Choi. It is pretty early here. By the way, my real name is Anisa. But please do not tell anyone else.

Energy: Don't worry, I won't. Anisa is a pretty name. Like "Anima," except switching the "s" and "m" huh?"

Anima: Yes! Not too clever, I suppose. Can I ask you, are you Korean? I looked up the last name Choi.

Energy: Yep. We Koreans don't leave much mystery with our last names. Park, Lee, Choi, Kim—that's half the population. So what's going on, Anisa?

Anima: Not too much.

Energy: So you take school in the summer? What do you do for fun?

Anima: I run for fun. It was not really school. It was, but it did not count for coursework. Now I am getting ready for the real school. It starts next week.

Energy: What year are you?

Anima: I will be a sophomore.

Energy: Ok. So tell me more about this animal spirit thing.

Anima: *blush* It is embarrassing, I cannot believe I said it out loud.

Energy: Oh, sorry. Forget I mentioned it. No pressure.

Anima: No it is ok. I do not mind telling you, Choi. But please do not tell the others, ok? Especially Antarctica, he can be critical.

Energy: Yeah, no kidding. Don't worry about him, though, he's harmless.

Email Inbox, 5:23 PM

From: GIA

Ms. Choi,

This is to let you know that we have received your stone.

For reference purposes, your client number is GD39712.

Please expect a full report within two weeks.

Thank you,

Meghan Poole

Email Outbox, 5:29 PM

To: Darger

Hey,

I'm here.

Where are you?

Energy

4Humours, 5:38 PM

Anima: Yes, you are right.

Energy: Ok, so do you have an animal spirit?

Anima: No, I do not think of it that way. I do not like the word “spirit.” That word seems to say that there is a spirit-world, which I do not believe in. Let me ask you, have you ever met someone and thought they were an animal?

Energy: I’m not sure what you mean. That they acted like an animal?

Anima: No, I did not say that right. I study evolution. Biology and the environment. Biotechnology, but not the branch that looks at nature. I want to use biotechnology to look at humans. What I study is that a species cannot evolve alone, correct? A species evolves in cooperation with its environment. A species does not evolve in a vacuum outside of space and time. That is the opposite of evolution. Evolution means adaptation within space, time, and environment. Once a species is within space, space becomes place. Does this make sense?

Energy: Yes! It’s very interesting to me.

Anima: Along with that, it also makes sense to say that species evolve along with other species. A species cannot just evolve over thousands of years without interacting with other species. That is just stupid. What gets people confused about evolution is that they think it has to do with perfection. Evolution has nothing to do with perfection.

Energy: Ok, that makes sense.

Anima: Humans coevolve with animals. Dogs assist hunter-gatherers. Dogs are intelligent only because they co-evolved with humans. Wild dogs are not as intelligent as pet dogs. Humans coevolve also with plants, insects, and bacteria. All of that. Humans coevolve with machines, too. The hammer, the wheel, they have been integrated into human culture for millenia. They shape evolution and they shape culture. The fork is integrated into one culture, the chopsticks into another. And now the telephone, the television, the computer. Humans do not evolve in a vacuum. They are integrated with all of these things. That is all I know, really. I am studying it.

Energy: Wow, it’s really fascinating. That has nothing to do with animal spirits, I was way off.

Anima: Animals are there. We coevolve with animals, with the environment, with all of that, with machines. So, what I really want to study is how this coevolution, how it shapes how we navigate the day to day world, ok?

Energy: That part about humans and machines really interests me.

Anima: Ok. So, in biology they would call that biotechnology or bioengineering. Which is what I do, and some of it covers what I study, but mostly they are focused on DNA.

Energy: Biometrics?

4Humours, 6:19 PM

Anima: Biometrics I never heard of that.

Energy: Fingerprinting, that kind of thing.

Anima: Oh, ok. I will have to read up on it. It sounds interesting.

Enter Darger

Darger: You rang?

Anima: Hey, Darger, welcome.

Energy: Darger, where you been?

Darger: Playing video games.

Anima: You should talk to Kindheart. She's interested in using video games to make 70 year-olds more active.

Energy: Hmmm.

Darger: Ok, so I originally came here because I was depressed, and I'm still depressed. I was thrown in a hospital, now I'm out and back in school, but I'm still depressed. They're just waiting for the medication to kick in. I now go to a doctor once a week, a psychologist, and I sit in a chair and he sits in a chair, and I don't say anything. Then, after ten minutes or so, he says, "You know, you don't have to say anything. We can just play chess or something." But I don't know how to play chess. So he tried to teach me, but I didn't like it.

Energy: You don't like chess?

Darger: No, I don't. I don't hate it, it just does nothing for me.

Anima: Maybe he's just trying to be your friend.

Darger: Yeah, I get that, Anima. I'm starting to think that the main job of doctors when it comes to depressed people is just to get them to stay alive. They figure, "Hey, if we get them to stay alive long enough, maybe one day they'll decide that they like living." It's a waiting game.

Energy: I got some weird news today.

Anima: What is that, Choi?

Energy: Ok, so I just found out I'm deaf in my right ear.

Anima: What? Oh, Choi, I am so sorry!

Darger: How do you "just" find something like that out? Wouldn't you know about it?

Energy: I thought it would go away—I mean, I thought my hearing would come back some day. But then I went to a specialist today, and he said it's a case of sudden hearing loss. I mean, he wants me to take some pills for a month, and they made me take an MRI test so now I know it's not a tumor. But, yeah, he even said that there's little chance the pills will work. He was a very nice man. Most doctors bullshit you. Prevaricate. But I could tell from his eyes.

Anima: I am sorry, Choi. I feel really bad for you. You must have been shocked.

4Humours, 6:45 PM

Energy: Well—part of the reason I'm telling you is because I don't feel sad. And I feel like that's weird. I should feel sad, right? But I don't. For about three minutes on the way home, I started freaking out, and I was getting claustrophobic and grabbing my ear. But after that—nothing. Just sort of, instantly, now I feel like this is who I am. It's really got me to thinking about emotions that we are supposed to feel but don't. I should be sad, but I'm not. But then I feel almost guilty because I don't feel sad. Isn't that weird?

Anima: No, that is not weird at all, Choi. I do not know how to cry, is that weird? I have never cried in my life. No, that is not true, my Mother said I cried when I was young. I meant, I have never cried that I can remember. So I always feel bad because I feel like I should be crying, but I just cannot! Girls are supposed to cry! People looking at me would think I am one of those girls that cries all of the time. I am tired, it is really early here. **Darger:** I don't cry either. Sorry. Course I'm a guy. Anima, I just realized that you have a weird way of writing. I can't figure out what it is.

Energy: I cry not often. Usually with my friend F. If she cries, I cry. Leave Anima alone, Darger.

Darger: So now we've opened up our souls. So what?

Energy: Yes, now we've all each had our little confessional moment. We're all people who don't really cry. It's an anti-weepy moment, anti-melodrama. Op! The knocking door, must go. Go to bed, Anima.

The door knocked thrice.

Standing opening—sees Cate outside standing.

"Hi," says Cate. "Seeing if you want to hang out tonight?"

"Sure," says Kyin. "Let me call Fiela and—I'll meet you here in ten minutes, ok?"

Cate halting—then nodding smiling.

Kyin back into the apartment, places a call.

Cell, 7:10 PM

Fiela: Crime?

Kyin: Yes. With Cate, ok?

Fiela: Alright. We've yet to have a talk about her.

Kyin: Like what?

Fiela: Like how she would sell her soul to brush your hair or something cheesy like that. Like how she dreams about you through fog-glow vision prancing in a field of poppies.

Kyin: So her fantasies are all from Monet? She's nice enough. She is my neighbor, you know. Do you know any of your neighbors?

Fiela: Why should I? You know the drill—either yuppies or hipsters. And for the record, yes, all lovey-dovey dream sequences are based upon either Monet or 70s films.

Kyin: Alright, we'll be there soon. Peace.

Climbing into a button-up brick-red.

Glasses on her nose, pulled over her ears.

Feet into heels high and black.

Coming into the hallway.

Cate standing smiling.

They walk up to Columbia to 14th Street.

7:27 PM

Into *Crime*.

Fiela sitting in the back.

They order drinks. The three sitting at a table circular, faux oak.

"Where's Tisha?" asks Kyin.

"Getting ready for school—starts this coming week."

"Oh, right," says Cate, "she's a teacher, isn't she?"

"Yes," says Fiela, "Art."

9:44 PM

Each five drinks drunk.

Cate leaning across, "I'm sorry," she says, "I can't remember what you do."

"Immigration," says Fiela drinking, "law."

"Oh, yes, ok."

Cate nodding sipping looking at the table, the condensation pooled.

"Can I ask you," she says, "What do you think about a universal ID card?"

"What—oh, you mean like they have in Britain? I think it's stupid."

"But it—do you, who are most of your clients? Are they here on—students?"

"No—we get all kinds, really. Rich, poor, legal, illegal."

"Illegal?"

"Yeah, sure. That's how it works, right? Illegal, sure."

11:16 PM

The crowd growing loud.

Kyin pointing to her ear.

They pay each and exit.

"Alright," says Fiela. "Last time we went south, now you two have to come to my place."

They agree.

11:39 PM

Tisha snoring.

Fiela beaming, "Yeah, she was—she was the one," she says swallowing looking pointing at Kyin, "she went to that guy's dorm room and punched him in the face. All of his roommates just stood there in shock."

Cate leaning forward, eyes wide.

"Not in the face," says Kyin, grabbing her collar, "don't exaggerate. In the neck."

"Fine," says Fiela, "in the neck. But he couldn't breathe, right?"

"He just—I was aiming for his chin and hit his—" grabbing her throat, "—his adam's apple."

Cate laughing whispering, "Did he report you?"

Fiela shaking her head. "No, not Tim. This guy—just," she stops, shaking her head.

12:47 AM

Cate on the couch sleeping moaning.

Fiela and Kyin in the kitchen. Kyin leaning into the refrigerator smelling food.

Fiela sitting on the counter eating peanuts. "Is she from around here?"

"No way," says Kyin. "A country girl."

"Oh—that makes sense. Does she come over often?"

From the refrigerator, Kyin grabbing butter.

"Now and then," she says.

Looking over at Cate sleeping.

Then dropping bread into the toaster.

Friday, September 11th

Sunny, 70°

5:14 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold. To the AC.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

The computer to the couch—clicks open her blog.

Searches—"bone graft," "broken hand bone graft," "plastic bone graft."

Blog, 5:19 PM

Coming back from a doctor's appointment. I just made an appointment to have surgery on my arm. Apparently, my bone still won't grow. It's just sitting there, even with the bone stimulant. So they are going to try and patch it back together using a bone graft. The way the doctor was describing it, they just take this plastic and screw it to my bone, then hope that it "encourages" my bones to grow together. He said that they could take some of my own bone instead of plastic, maybe bone from my hip or something—but that just freaked me out. To get the plastic coax my bones, they have to insert my own bone marrow into the plastic. The appointment's in two weeks.

A police shooting three days ago in Capitol Hill. Three sentences in the police blotter. "The suspect was trying to avoid an off-duty Police Officer," something like that. The officer's name is Michael Shelton. Early this morning, I went to his place (11 Rittenhouse Street NE) and put in a camera.

The weekly reports are pretty boring.

Robert Thompson

Spends more time away from home. Went and checked up on him last Friday and Saturday—he was out with Sabine, spent the night.

The usual schedule: wake up, go to work, come home and have dinner, watch television. On the weekend, he and his wife were gone all of Saturday, coming home Sunday around noon. They looked tired and he was carrying a suitcase.

Cate

Spends more time on the computer (Password 2bx456cw875). I'm unable to see the screen well enough to make out what's going on. I think her computer must have a kind of direct link or something like that to the NSA, because I can't find the webpage she uses to logon. I'll try to use her computer tonight when she goes to sleep.

Blog, 5:52 PM

Watches a reality show, has tea.

On the weekends, she spends more time inside. I've been spending most Fridays with her, sometimes with Fiela and Tisha, sometimes not. It takes around 5 drinks to get her talking away, around 7 drinks to make her sleep.

Patrick Walker

According to the tracking device, he's spent the past two Saturdays going to Gettysburg. The tracker is now dead, so tomorrow I'm going up early to follow him—hopefully he'll go up to PA again.

Jason Green

I should note here that Green is back from “administrative leave.”

Jason Green has three children, all young—roughly, 5, 7, and 11 years old. His wife works the first half of the day, then comes home. Green works in the evening into night, sometimes late night into morning. He usually takes care of the kids during the morning—getting them ready for school all of that.

They have three boys—really cute kids that love their dad. They are really messy too, especially the 7 year old. So then, around 5 PM or 9 PM, Jason goes off to work. So during the week, Jason and his wife (I think her name is Melissa—but I can't quite read his lips perfectly—besides, he usually calls her “Mommy”) only see each other briefly, just around dinner time. Then he heads off to work, coming home around 2 AM or 6 AM (depending upon which shift? I'm not sure yet), but sometimes not until later (earlier in the morning).

On the weekends, Jason sleeps in while the rest of the family gets up and eats. Then, when he wakes up, they all go out and spend the whole day outside.

The kids have a lot of friends from around the neighborhood, and they'll often come by, and the parents will stop by and chat with Jason and Melissa.

They sent me back the stone—diamond, I should say, but it was an odd letter. They sent along this whole—it's almost the size of a book, explaining how diamonds are graded and cut and all that. In the letter they sent, they said that they were able to determine that the diamond came from the Central African Republic, but what they really wanted to know was where I got it, because they were angry that such a beautiful diamond was cut into a cube. Then they spent half the letter explaining to me how a diamond should be cut and the history of diamond cutting and all that. And they said they have no way of telling how much such a stone would be worth because it isn't cut properly. It was odd, because I was expecting this form letter and a bill, and they sent me this really long angry (in a formal way) letter with a book.

Searches—"DC weather," "DC forecast."

Changes into a long-sleeved shirt, jeans, boots.

Down the hall, knocking. Muffled talking sounds.

Cate opening the door dishabille.

"Oh—sorry," she says, "I was talking to my Mom."

Nodding Kyin.

"I'll be quick," says Cate, turning opening the door wide, walking into her room.

Entering Kyin, closing the door, asking, "Where do your parents live again?"

Cate dressing. "In Maine," she says.

"Oh—do you miss it?"

"I do." Cate coming out dressed, "I do now—especially the cold. But I hated Maine when I was a kid. Are we meeting up with Fiela and Tisha?"

On the couch, Kyin, shaking her head. "No—Fiela's sick and Tisha's out with her coworkers."

Cate on couch. "Oh," she says. "Do we have plans?"

"No, no plans."

7:44 PM

On the couch sitting drinking watching a film.



9:24 PM

Mixing, bringing drinks.

Cate wrapping her fingers around the stem. "Do you collect films?"

"No, I wouldn't say that," says Kyin. "Just—some, if I like them, I buy. It wasn't bad, was it?"

"No—I liked it. I think I'm just not used to watching movies that aren't fast-paced."

In the chair, Kyin folding her legs. "For me it's the sound, the audio—even when it's not dubbed, this film always seems dubbed to me—it seems off—the main character is dubbed into Italian, but everyone else is just speaking Italian—so it's like these two different languages mapped onto each other.

"The slow pace, the long takes—yeah, they take some getting used to. We're brought up in a culture with fast-paced editing. Even something like reality-TV is cut and edited to make watching someone's daily life—what would normally be boring—to make it interesting."

Drinking Cate. "I watch those reality shows. They're my guilty pleasure, I guess. It's voyeuristic, right? Watching someone's life. Even if they know you're watching. I'm always wondering about the parts they choose to leave out—because it's always weeks of time—the filming—and they cut it down to maybe forty-five minutes or so. And then they have the after-show, and all of the characters—the people—are always saying, 'They edited it to make me look bad.'"

Nodding sipping Kyin.

"Yeah," she says, "if it was just unedited, a straight filming of their lives, even with those people overacting, trying to be famous or whatever—starting fights, getting drunk, getting naked—even with all that, it'd still be boring as hell to watch ninety-percent of the time. Just sitting watching someone's life like that is boring."

11:14 PM

Cate sipping leaning into Kyin.

Crossed legs, Kyin asking, "When do you go down to Harrisonburg?"

"Oh—down there? Not until—the middle of October or so. It's really quiet. And then—if it snows, then it takes me forever to get to work, because I have to go around the mountain."

Cate exhaling coughing—she sits up, placing her drink on the table.

Turning blushing to look at Kyin.

“You ok?”

Nodding Cate. “Yes—just went down the wrong pipe.”

Standing walking to the kitchen, pouring then drinking water cold.

Kyin turning looking toward the kitchen. “I bet the snow’s beautiful, though,” she says.

Cate nodding drinking—holding her neck. “Yes—it kinda reminds me of home. It’s more—there’re not really mountains where my parents live, but it’s still—it’s winter for a long time.”

Coming back to the couch.

“But you hated it growing up.”

“No—I didn’t. I mean—I just hated—I would’ve hated anywhere I grew up, I think. So now I miss it. But not enough to want to move back. I love my job.”

1:27 AM

Sleeping moaning Cate.

From her back pocket, Kyin pulls out a notepad.

2bx456cw875

Sitting at the computer—entering the code.

The screen blinks, then opens to a main page.

NSA Remote Secure Access
All Actions WILL be Monitored

Clicking on a link—“Cryptologic Division.”

Cate Fremd

Monday, September 14th:

1. Daily Biometric cipher reports
2. *Einstein 3* status page
3. Continue work on Biometric blood database
4. Confer with US-VISIT representative, Phillip Nolan.

Upcoming Projects:

1. Continuance of Biometric cipher reports
2. Report to Sugar Grove, WV for Fall service
 - 2A. Fall service: October 16th-November 20th
 - 2B. Continuance of Biometric CR project

2C. November 21st-November 26th: Meet with
FBI representatives in Fairmont, WV for
Interagency Biometric Database Consortium
Conference (IBDCC)
3. Mandatory Leave
3A. Select 10 days between November 27th—
January 1st

Writing in her notebook.

Cate coughing—moaning breathing.

Notebook, 1:36 AM
Einstein 3
Biometric cipher reports
US-VISIT
Phillip Nolan
Sugar Grove Oct 16-Nov 20
Fairmont Nov 21-26
Biometric Consortium

Cate again coughing.

Kyin clicks off the computer, stuffing the
notepad back into her rear pocket.

Into the kitchen, pouring water cold.

Carrying it to Cate sitting up in bed.

“Oh,” she says, taking the water, “What time is it?”

Cate drinking, collapsing back onto the bed—sleeping.

Back into the kitchen, Kyin refills the water—placing it on the endtable, next to sleeping
Cate.

1:56 AM

Into her apartment, to the kitchen for water cold, Excedrin swallowed.

To the couch, the computer lapped.

Searches—“Einstein 3,” “NSA Einstein 3,” “FBI Einstein 3,” “Biometrics Einstein 3,”
“Einstein 3 cryptology,” “biometric cipher,” “biometric cipher reports,” “US-VISIT,” “US-
VISIT NSA,” “US-VISIT FBI,” “US-VISIT biometrics,” “US-VISIT cryptology,” “US-VISIT RFID,”
“RFID,” “RFID and NSA,” “RFID National ID,” “Phillip Nolan,” “Phillip Nolan US-VISIT,”
“Phillip Nolan US government,” “Phillip Nolan NSA,” “Biometric consortium,” “Biometric
consortium conference,” “secure biometric consortium conference.”

Searches, reads, refines.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 3:02 AM

Friday night/Sat morning with Cate. This is the usual now, our weekly schedule. I've learned that Cate is a pattern-oriented person. She does things regularly, and if she veers from the schedule it is only slightly. Always up at the same time, always 2 cups of tea—one in the morning, one at night. Always Reality TV shows at night, always on her computer for 2 hours. Always to bed by 11.

I think she's getting sick or something—has a bad cough.

Logged onto her computer finally, but didn't get much. It is obviously not the "real" NSA site, just some sort of "home base". All I got was her upcoming schedule. She's in Sugar Grove from Oct 16th until November 20th, then she's in Fairmont, WV until November 26th. Then she has a two week vacation.

Her schedule is all vague and whatnot, but I do know she's meeting with a US-VISIT guy, Phillip Nolan. US-VISIT (United States Visitor and Immigration Status Indicator Technology) from what I can tell, is just an advanced kind of biometric passport. The passport, unlike a normal passport, is connected to the US visitor (everyone from tourists to people with Visas, etc) biometrically.

The US-VISIT passport also has an RFID chip. I got a little bored reading, but the RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) is a chip that enables the people reading it to track it. It's like a tracking chip that also contains information. I think it's like, instead of having to "read" your credit card, a card with RFID just needs to be swiped. So, the DC Metro cards have RFID technology.

What's interesting, too, about this RFID, is that they are putting it into all new Driver's Licenses and also the new National ID. Last time we went out with Fiel, Cate asked her what she thought about "National ID card."

She's always working on something to do with "Biometric CR."

Also going to a biometric conference.

Ok, suddenly I'm exhausted and bored with this.

Computer the desk. Kyin to the couch.

Dozes.

Monday, September 14th

Sunny, 69°

9:13 AM

Rockville—the lobby of the Montgomery County Police Department, waiting.

A man walking up to Kyin.

“Hello—Ms. Choi?”

Holding out his hand.

“Oh,” she says, standing, “Hi.”

Shaking his hand.

“Come on back,” he says, turning.

Walking with her down a hallway to a desk.

He sits, opening a folder.

“Ok—so, we have your brother now in the FBI CODIS database. Or, we sent the information to them—but, the way it works, Ms. Choi, is that police departments from all over the country send DNA to the FBI—so there is—it can take quite a while for them to get to it, to process it. And there are also crimes that take precedent—murders, drug trafficking.”

Looking up at her, “So all I’m saying is that—it helps a lot that we sent something the FBI, but it could take a while before we hear anything.”

Nodding Kyin. “How long—is a while?” she asks.

Leaning away from the folder. “It could take as much as four, five months. I know this isn’t what you want to hear, Ms. Choi. It’s unfortunate, but missing persons are not very high on the list. I also requested that the DNA be put into the International DNA Database, considering that your brother could possibly be in another country.”

Leaning forward. “I want to reassure you, Ms. Choi, we are also doing our share of legwork. I’ve been down to Dupont Circle, and I’ve put a word in with the DC Police as well. As I told your mother, it could help if you put fliers up in neighborhoods where your brother might be seen—a photograph, a phone number.”

Standing Kyin holding out her hand. “Yes, ok,” she says, “well—I have to go now. Thank you for everything,” she says.

The officer standing taking her hand. “You or your mother both can contact me at any time, Ms. Choi. We’re doing everything possible. As I said to your mother, often those victims that have the most-involved family members have the best chance of being found. It’s a good sign, you coming down here.”

“Yes, ok,” says Kyin, turning to go.

“Thank you,” she says.

10:44 AM

A light mist of rain.

Grabbing a paper climbing onto the platform.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

Into the car, flipping through the local section—to the police blotter.

District Briefing

Man found Dead

A man was found dead outside of an apartment complex last night on the 600 Block of Morton Street NW. Police were called to the scene at 2 AM Monday morning, arriving to find Marcus Smith, 36, lying with three bullet wounds to the chest. Smith was taken to nearby Howard University Hospital and declared dead.

—James O'Toole

The rocking
compartment.

The drops on the
glass.

Watching as the train descends into earth.

The flickering lights, the men and women sitting reading.

Closing her lids—listening.

11:26 AM

Up, up, up.

A man playing a violin—*Minor Swing*.

Kyin reaches into her pocket, pulling out a bill and tossing it into the instrument case.

Across Taft Bridge.

Into the lobby, checking mail.

Into her apartment, to the AC, to water cold.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the television.

Computer to the couch. Clicking open the cameras each—rewind, fast-forward.

1:44 PM

Searches—"Morton Street, DC," "600 Morton Street DC," "Morton street murder, DC,"
"Park Morton Apartments, DC," "DC Part Morton," "New Communities Initiative, DC,"
"New Communities Park Morton," "Park Morton BIDs."

Searches reads, refines.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 2:35 PM

A murder at 600 Morton Street NW. A man found with three bullet wounds—taken to the hospital, dead. This was in the back of the paper, a few lines. The front of the paper was some local column about the history of squirrels in DC and why we have so many.

Looking up this area, “Morton” is Park Morton Apartments— the jargon—“Urban Housing.” I knew the name sounded familiar—this is another area that the city is planning on demolishing, replacing with shiny new streets. The “New Communities Initiative.” Business Improvement District (BID). Tear down homes and put in businesses parks surrounded by cookie-cutter “mixed” townhomes. I’m planning on going later and looking at this area.

Camera logs:

Robert Thompson

Normal weekend.

I may need to put a tracking device on Sabine. Or at least trace her cell phone.

Jason Green

Sat—went out with the kids, the oldest dressed in soccer gear.

Sun—watched football, fell asleep early.

Cate Fremd

Becoming more predictable in her patterns.

Always calls her mother at the same time.

Patrick Walker

Drove up, following him to Gettysburg. Had breakfast with the same man from months ago (photographed). After breakfast, they split up, and I followed the other man. He drove fairly slowly, all the way up past Harrisburg, exiting at some small town.

No news on Ian—not a surprise. The officer—Gutierrez—said we might not hear anything for 4 months at the earliest. I’m debating whether or not to tell this to Mom. They don’t have their own DNA lab, so they send it to the FBI. Police from all over the country do this, and they give priority to murders. So it could take a while.

Mom gave me an idea. She said something to me: “People are made up of individuals.” I’m not sure what she was getting at—I think, really, it was her poor English. But, I think she was trying to say—I’m not sure.

But I was thinking also on the Metro, something not quite related to all that. The first time I saw a camera, I was in Barry Farm—so I started putting them in cops’ houses—ok.

Blog, 2:39 PM

But what Mom said made me realize, if the police have cameras outside, why don't I do that? Instead of just watching what they do in their boring lives, I can watch what they do on the job. Instead of watching private individuals, I can watch public people—people out in public.

So, I'm planning on buying a bunch of street cameras.

I'm going to begin first with Trinidad, because that's a hot-spot for police shootings. Maybe two or three cameras. I haven't yet decided where to put them, how much I should try to hide them. I'm thinking—how many people even see the DC Police cameras?

If you know they're there, that's one thing—but until that cop pointed out the one to me in Barry Farm—until I went online and searched for information, I had no clue. So maybe I'm just clueless. Once I started researching them, it's not like the government hides them.

They even have press conferences saying, "Look, we're putting another one here—great, right?" And some people want them. Of course they don't realize, the cameras don't ever actually catch crimes—they just push it away to somewhere else. So you'd have to have cameras covering every inch to catch something—like London. But even in London the cameras don't do much, because of all the "technical difficulties." But we'll see what I can do.

I'm betting that no one will even notice them. You can't see what you're not looking for, right? And I'm betting the cops wouldn't even expect them either, right? They wouldn't even have a fucking clue. What's probably the craziest thing is that they won't be illegal—filming someone in public is not a crime (the tracking devices aren't illegal either). So if someone did see a camera and report it, it wouldn't matter.

One other thing that's come up—the time spent watching all these cameras. I already spend a lot of time watching all of the home cameras, even with fast-forwarding and rewinding. This is the same problem police have, I know. Why the NSA has "data mining." So if I add more cameras—and then again more in the future, I need to find a way to better manage my time watching all of these.

First off, most everything these people do is boring as hell. Eating, sleeping, watching television, sitting at the computer, going to the bathroom—that is about 99% of their lives. So sitting watching that is extremely boring. No, not entirely true—the first week it was fascinating. Now it's boring.

Blog, 2:52 PM

Not only that, the videos don't have any sound. So I sit and watch a boring soundless video of them doing boring shit. So I need to come up with a way to make this, all of this—setting up the cameras, watching, finding the crimes, going to the scene—more efficient. I need to take into account the number of cameras that I will be watching, which cameras I should watch at which times (so, I can look up what time of day most shootings occur in Trinidad, for instance), etc.

Also, I've decided that I probably won't follow Cate down to Sugar Grove.

It's sortof—I know I won't have access either to Sugar Grove or to Fairmont (I couldn't even find anything in Fairmont when I was down there), so I'll spend most of my time just sitting around. So I can either—I need to find a way to get Cate to talk about this stuff. I have no way of breaking any codes—I don't know anything about how to do that. I suck at crosswords. If I follow her around, then I might see her meeting with people, but then I'll just end up following them around to see who they meet up with, and—it'll be an endless passing of the buck. Am I just seeing who meets with whom? Where does that get me?

The problem is, I need to come up with some sort of framework for this, but I need to do that without trying to predict what it is that I will see—I need to avoid jargonizing, categorizing. I am not looking for something. How do I set an endgoal without defining my project? For now, I'll just leave off planning too much.

Searching—ordering cameras.

Computer to the desk.

To the bathroom, washing her hand, her face.

Grabbing her bag. Down and out—up to Columbia.

At Biltmore, waiting and stepping onto the H1 Bus—riding up Columbia to Georgia.

At Georgia, jumping off—walking up the hill to Morton.

On the streetlight above—a DC Police surveillance camera.

4:32 PM

Down a deadend road surrounded by brick buildings with windows and terraces.

The street quiet.

Walking between the buildings—two woman standing talking, one holding a child. They stop and look at Kyin.

“Excuse me,” she says, approaching, “Hello—I’m a reporter covering the shooting that happened last night—do you know where it was?”

Both women pointing behind Kyin.

The woman holding the child asking, "Which paper you with?"

"I'm independent," says Kyin. "Actually—do you mind if I ask you a few questions?"

The women looking at each other; the woman on the left coming forward.

"Like what?" she asks.

"Like—" Kyin taking out a recorder, "Ok—do you mind if I record you?"

The woman nodding.

"Ok," she says.

The other woman coming forward.

"Ok," says Kyin—holding out the recorder, "And what is—what are your names?"

The woman on the left, holding the child—"Shawna—and this is Caden."

The bashful boy.

"Hi, Caden," says Kyin leaning down.

The boy behind his mother.

"Good looking boy," says standing Kyin—turning to the other woman, asking, "And your name, miss?"

"Alycia," she says.

"Ok—and how long have you two lived in this area?"

"Six years," says Alycia.

"Forever," says Shawna.

"And what do you think of this neighborhood?"

Shawna shrugging, resting her hand on Caden's head.

"My apartment needs a lot of work," she says. "A new stove, new ceiling."

Alycia nodding waving in front of her face. "Used to have tons of cockroaches," she says.

Nodding Kyin—resting her elbow against her stomach. "How about this whole neighborhood? What do you think of the New Communities Initiative?"

Alycia looking at Shawna.

Nodding Shawna—Caden grabbing her arm. "I know what you mean," she says, "So that's what your story's about?"

"Yes."

Shawna nodding looking at Alycia. "Yeah, my Dad knows more about it, you should ask him."

"It's a plan," says Kyin—wiping her face, "by businesses and the mayor to tear down all of this and replace it with new buildings."

Alycia smiling, "They just hate the thugs," she says.

"Yeah, I know what it is," says Shawna. "You should talk to my Dad—he gets mad—he'll talk about it."

Nodding Kyin leaning. "Alright, I will," she says, "but I also want to know what you think. Do you think they'll give you nice new housing like they promise?"

Shrugging Shawna. "Who knows?"

"A couple weeks ago—no, a month," says Alycia, "They came in here and went into all of our apartments, and they threw out my boyfriend."

"Who did?"

"The police," says Shawna. "They went into all of our apartments, into my bedroom—I don't know what they was looking for."

"They just wanted to get rid of thugs—they threw out my boyfriend and told him he couldn't live here. And they did it to my stepmom's boyfriend, too."

Nodding Kyin. "I wonder what that was about," she says, she asks.

The women shrugging each.

"They think we all thugs," says Alycia.

Shawna lifting Caden kicking. "He needs to go," she says.

"Oh—ok," says Kyin. "Where can I—where is your Dad?"

Shawna nodding pointing. "Down at *Juke*—down Georgia."

Nodding packing Kyin—smiling.

"Ok," she says. "Thank you both."

5:13 PM

Down Georgia.

Into *Juke*—wood tables, dimmed lights.

Three men bending over the bar—two crowding a table.

Letting the door close behind her—Kyin standing in the dark.

The men turning staring. Men in their fifties, sixties.

To the bar, ordering a Miller Light.

Money on the bar, looking around—behind herself, the dark room.

The bartender sliding the bottle.

Kyin leaning, "Does someone here—does anyone here know Shawna?"

The bartender nodding down the bar.

A man at the end of the bar turning slowly looking at Kyin.

"That's mine," he says, he drinks.

Carrying her bag, the beer down the bar.

"Hi," she says sitting, "She told me to come see you. I'm doing a story on the New Communities Initiative, asking residents what they think."

The man nodding drinking.

"What's that?" says another man down the bar.

The first man responding, "New Communities," he says. "The mayor's thing—you know how they're rebuilding everything around here. Planning to, anyway."

Turning to look at Kyin.

Asking, "What paper you with?"

Kyin taking out her recorder. "I'm independent," she says.

"Can I record you?" she asks.

The man looking down at the recorder. "I figured," he says. "Doesn't sound like a story for papers or television."

Rotating his body back to the bar. "I don't mind if you record me," he says, "but shouldn't you ask everyone? It's not like that recorder picks up just my voice."

Nodding drinking Kyin standing facing the room.

"Ok," she says, "I'm interviewing—" turning back to the first man, "What is your name, sir?"

"Charles."

"I'm interviewing Charles about the New Communities Initiative—it's a project by the Mayor and big business to tear down Park Morton and replace it with a new development. They're also doing it to Sursum Corda over here and to Barry Farm across the river and—and I can't remember where else. So, I'm just asking if you don't mind being recorded, and I'd also like anyone else's opinion on the whole thing."

A man from the table— "You don't look like a reporter—what paper are you with?"

"I don't work for a paper—I'm independent."

A man at the end of the bar— "*Independent*—which paper is that?"

"It just means I don't work for a paper or television station."

The bartender leaning in, nodding, "So they just pay you as they go, then—like a contract worker."

"No," says sitting Kyin, looking to him, to all of them. "I don't work for them at all. I publish my own stories."

Charles nodding drinking.

The others quiet.

"Alright," says Charles, "what do you want to know?"

Kyin turning on the recorder. "I just want to know about the New Communities Initiative—what do you think about it? Why are they doing it? Should they be doing it? If not, then should they be doing anything? Or is the neighborhood fine as it is?"

"There isn't anything wrong with the neighborhood," says the man at the table, "It's those few bad young is all."

"More than a few," says his companion.

The man at the end of the bar holding his bottle. "If you're talking about Morton, that place's rundown—always been that way. Used to be a war zone."

"Not always," says Charles.

"Well—since I can remember anyway," says the man.

"So they should tear it down?" Kyin asks him.

"No," says the man, "I didn't say that, exactly."

Charles looking at Kyin.

"Look," he says, "it doesn't matter. I don't know why you're here asking. They're tearing it down anyway—they just had a nice meeting, the mayor standing in front of microphones applauding himself. What's the point of asking about it? Two years from now it'll be a memory."

Another beer for Kyin. "Did they ask you if they could tear it down?"

"Ask? Shit. They don't ask," says Charles—drinking, "A few years back, at a meeting, they asked for—for *feedback*," turning to Kyin, pointing, "*community feedback*—which, if you don't know, means—'Putting this here on the record.'"

"And week later they sent a form—a census, statistics—'How much money do you make, Mr. Head of Household? How many children do you have?' That kind of shit. Covering their asses—so they can say, 'Community members are excited for the project. We have statistics.'"

Charles drinking.

Kyin drinking.

Charles talking, "I saw them on the news, over at Sursum Corda protesting; maybe about, what—thirty, forty people? So what good did that do?"

The man at the end of the bar leaning forward. "Not a damn thing," he says.

"They looked like fools," he says.

"So what?" he says, "Am I supposed to get ignorant up here? Like those fools?"

"For what?" he asks.

The other man at the table shaking his head. "Since when," he says, "did they ask us about anything that hasn't already been decided?"

The first man at the table laughing. "New Communities—that means White Communities. *New* means *White*."

Kyin turning to the man. "From what I've read, they're planning on letting current residents stay. It'll be mixed-income housing. Black, Latino, White, Asian."

The other man at the table speaking, "My son has a place down there—makes fifteen grand a year. Now, tell me, how in the hell is he supposed to pay a mortgage on a new house on that? So are these people coming in going to give him a better job to pay for that new house?"

Charles talking, "When they built Morton, they had the same promises, right? That's what you need to understand. It's not that I don't believe—it's that—if they do, fine, if they tear it all down and build nice new homes with them buppie stores and White people and—you know, uh, Asians and whatnot—I don't give a damn, ok?

"But that shouldn't be the plan—that—all that shit should be later, right?

"The way these damn government pimps have it figured, it's all backwards.

"Number one priority should be the goddamn people living here! I mean, what the hell!

"If you wanna clean up them youngn, that stuff—fine, more power to you, that's straight—but you need to—you're, your damn mind, stop thinking about building the suburbs in this city with rich White people coming in and buying up condos. Don't think about all that shit, and don't send me a damn survey. Come up here and talk to us, every damn one of us, ok? If we're not home, come the fuck back.

"My daughter—you talked to her, right? She doesn't know a damn thing about—what'd she say about it, anything?—I bet she didn't say a damn thing, right?"

Drinking Kyin placing the bottle on the counter.

"She said they came in and threw people out—the police."

Charles shaking his head.

The man at the table talking, "That was a while ago—maybe a year."

The man at the end of the bar leaning forward, "What do you mean they threw people out?"

"Yeah," says Charles, finishing the bottle, waving for another, "That's it right there.

"They come into my home—yeah, they knocked, but they come in and search my apartment to see if I have anyone staying who shouldn't—anyone who isn't on the lease. Looking for six-forty, that kind of thing.

"My home, right? So what does that mean? It means that it *isn't* my damn home. It's their home—the government's home.

"So they can come and go as they please. 'Here you go, here's the keys—don't even knock next time, thank you!'

"So it's for our own good, they say. Like they watch out for us or some shit.

"Maybe they find three runners. Then they send these boys to prison for ten, twenty years. So they say, 'Hey all, we found three ruthless criminals. We've kept the neighborhood safe! The community is so thankful!' The fuck? If you wanna keep the neighborhood safe, then why do I see police only after somebody's been shot? And when I see them, why's it always some kid who just got out of the academy, who's scared outta his damn mind and has an itchy finger?"

Charles drinking from the bottle cold.

Sipping looking up.

"What was I talking about?" he asks.

The man at the end of the bar laughing.

Smiling Kyin.

"Your daughter warned me," she says.

Drinking Charles shaking his head.

"Yeah," he says, "she gets sick of me talking."

Smiling drinking Kyin. "She has a cute boy," she says. "Caden, right?"

Charles drinking looking at Kyin. "Caden, yeah. He's two—no, three now."

Kyin drinking.

Charles drinking.

"No father, though," he says.

They sit and drink.

8:17 PM

Coming into the apartment—to the AC, to water cold.
Holding her head as she tosses Excedrin into her mouth, swallowing.
Lying on the couch.
Dozing.

Tuesday, September 22nd
Light rain, 63°
5:52 AM

Coughing Kyin, up from the couch. Holding her head into the kitchen for water cold.
Excedrin—ear medication—bone stimulant—swallowed.
Slipping into sandals. Grabbing keys.
Down to the trash, the brown bag speckled with spots wet.
A police cruiser passing along the street.
Back up to her apartment, looking down. *Neighbor 44*—Mr. Dixon—standing smoking holding the dog leashed.
Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.
To the kitchen making coffee.
Seaweed, rice, kimchi—a hardboiled egg. Squirting ketchup into the bowl.
Sitting eating drinking, pulling the envelope from the bag, the folder from the envelope.
Looking at the pages covered in writing. Then placing the pages back into the folder, writing the date on the front.
Clicks on the sound.

News, 6:17 AM

Female Anchor: Recapping our top story today, a tragic shooting in Northwest. We return to the scene with Terry. Terry?

Terry: A terribly tragic scene today in Glover Park, where a man was found brutally murdered on a street lined with rowhouses. [cut to image of rowhouses] Just off Wisconsin Avenue on this beautiful tree-lined street, danger was waiting. [cut to Terry walking down the street, turning to look at the camera] As you can see, this is a quiet, peaceful neighborhood. But last night, just an ordinary man was struck a fatal blow.

[cut to Terry interviewing a woman]

News, 6:20 AM

Terry: “I’ve lived here my whole life. To think that someone could be murdered, right here!” [cut to Terry interviewing a man] “What, here? Someone was murdered here? Wow.” [cut to Terry standing on the street] As you can see, the residents of this neighborhood are quite shaken—so much so, that some of them have demanded action from the DC Police. [cut to Terry interviewing a woman] “I don’t understand how the DC Police can just let murders take place right here in our community! To me, it says that our police department needs a lot of work.” The DC Police Chief plans of holding a press conference here later today. Patricia?

Female Anchor: Thanks, Terry. In an effort to curb crime, DC Police will be stepping up their patrols of the Glover Park neighborhood. Up next, a local restaurant is serving Chinese pizza?

Male Anchor: Yeah, you don’t see that everyday. Also, an Arlington teen does really well on the SATs. How well? Stick around to find out.

Mutes the screen, carrying the dishes to the kitchen, the dishwasher. Refilling the mug with coffee.

The sounds of the street—car doors slamming, engines starting, cabs honking.

Birds—sirens in the distance.

Back to the window, looking down. A couple walking a dog, the man pulling a hood over his head.

A woman walking to her hatchback, wiping the windshield.

A man standing next to his coupe, staring at the yellow parking boot on his left front tire, pulling his cell phone from his jacket pocket.

The street splashed with rain.

The coffee mug on the coffeetable.

Carrying the computer to the couch. Clicking open chat.

ThunkChat, 6:34 AM

Vatbrain83: My own inclination is to distrust intuition. I’m not saying I never follow my intuition, I’m just saying that when my only reason for doing something is my intuition, that often isn’t reason enough.

2cyborg: Maybe it is reason enough, you just don’t know it.

Becomingbeing: I think we’ve discussed this before. If by intuition you mean “gut feelings,” then I would argue that we all follow “gut feelings,” whether we are aware of it or not.

ThunkChat, 6:42 PM

Becomingbeing: We have several different jargons here, all of which are similar yet different, overlapping and influencing each other. “Unconscious”—a psychoanalytic jargon, but one that can now just mean something of which we are not aware. So, when I’m driving and thinking about something else, my driving actions—shifting lanes, signaling, exiting—are “unconscious.” Other jargons are “impulses,” “gut feelings,” “emotions,” “instincts,” “intuitions,” “second sense,” and probably some others I can’t think of right now. But just to state my own position, I believe that we are guided by gut feelings when we make decisions, and we rationalize those decisions after the fact.

Vatbrain83: BB—here you come, clouding things up! Making more questions! Curse you!

Swampman: This does sound like something we’ve talked about before. But we’re always rehashing old arguments in here anyway. That’s just part of the dynamic of this format, ever refining our positions.

2cyborg: So, these various “jargons”—are they biological? Cultural? Or individually cultivated? Oh, I already know your answer—“some combination.”

Becomingbeing: Ok, to narrow it down (for you, VB!)—an example. A mechanic working on a car that she’s worked on a thousand times before—say, a Ford Taurus. She knows all the parts, she knows all the common problems. She can listen to the radio, talk to her coworkers while she’s fixing the car. She’s thinking about what’s for lunch, blahblahblah. The point is—she doesn’t have to think about how to fix the car—she just does it. Doing is knowing.

Becomingbeing: It is an individually developed “gut feeling”—it’s not something culturally handed down to her from previous generations, and it’s not something biological.

2cyborg: I’m not being a jerk, alright—I’m seriously wondering—has anyone ever met a female mechanic? I’m sure some exist out there, I’m just wondering if anyone here has dealt with one.

Swampman: How is this question relevant, Cyborg? And yes, we have talked about this before. The baseball pitcher, BB.

Vatbrain83: My sister is pretty good with cars, but she’s not a mechanic—I mean, it’s not her job.

2cyborg: Well, partially I’ll admit, I’m just curious. But it also makes me think of—it’s interesting you mention baseball, Swampy—I’m not sure what you’re referencing, but you know most girls aren’t “born” learning to throw like girls and boys aren’t “born” learning to throw like boys. It’s something taught to them, something they culturally learn. Or, in the case of girls, something they don’t learn—that’s why throwing like a girl is actually “un-throwing,” it’s throwing by someone who was never taught how to throw. I’m sure that’s all changing and plenty of girls can throw “like a boy,” but still. Most girls “push” the ball instead of throwing it.

ThunkChat, 7:04 PM

Becomingbeing: Oh yeah, Swampy, you're right—the baseball conversation. No, I've never met a female mechanic, and I don't know much about cars. We can do it! And I'm not on my period either, Cyborg. But, yes, you make a good point, I think I see what you're getting at. If we can say that being able to “throw like a boy” is culturally learned, then maybe we can argue as well that being able to fix a car guided solely by “gut feelings,” or learned knowhow—well, maybe that has something to do with cultural circumstances as well.

Vatbrain83: Yes, we have talked about all this before. But, see, “intuition,” for me at least, differs from “gut feeling”—more than that they are just different “jargons,” to use your favorite word, BB. An intuition is something that IS conscious, it's something you think about. You have an intuition that your husband is cheating on you. Alright, maybe you have that intuition because first you had a gut feeling. Maybe gut feelings can cause intuitions. But the two are two completely different things. You have the gut feeling because you notice certain changes without “noticing” them; that is, without thinking about them. You notice that he doesn't want to have sex. He doesn't like to kiss you or hug you. He is always late. He likes to wash his own clothes. But maybe you don't think about these things—your mind just absorbs them, collecting them.

Vatbrain83: And, put together, they form a gut feeling. Then, once you have that gut feeling, you start to think about it, and that thinking is called intuition. And then, once you starting thinking about why you are having this intuition, “Where did this come from? Am I just being irrationally paranoid and jealous?” then you are doing something else: you're conceptualizing. It's like rewinding the tape, parsing out what the gut feelings are made of.

2cyborg: That's a really sharp argument, VB. But I have to ask—um, does this “cheating” example stem from personal experience?

Becomingbeing: You're such an ass, Cyborg. Ok, VB, you've probably convinced me that “gut feeling” and “intuition” are not simply parallel jargons. I still think of intuition as more of a vague feeling than someone thinking about something—but that's just what I call “jargon refining”—that is, where people argue over the “correct” use of a word. I don't think it benefits us to argue over how to use a word properly—I'll leave that kind of jargon refining to the grammarians.

Swampman: Yeah, we could end up getting into an argument about language and all that. Have any of you ever met LanGame? Wow, that guy will just go on and on about language if you let him. I was actually—sometimes when I'm here I sit and think, “This kind of stuff would probably be really boring to some people,” but talking to LanGame was the first time I myself was bored out of my skull. That guy is the quintessential Boring Philosopher.

Vatbrain83: All my friends think philosophy is boring. Unless we're drinking, that is. That's why I'm lucky to have this place.

Coffee hot into the mouth—the tongue, the throat.

Pressing her palm into her eye.

“Fucking eye,” says Kyin.

Carrying the computer to the desk—shutting it down.

To the kitchen, shaking out Excedrin—swallowing with water cold.

Clicking off the lights.

Onto the couch, her palm pressed tight against her eye socket.

9:23 AM

On the couch, Kyin draping the cast over her face—right palm pressed into her socket.

“La, shit, la, shit, la shit la shit laaaaa shit. I said the other day to a Mexican beaver la shit, and he said la shit is a very compelling argument, and I said duh shit, but then I was wondering is chicken always chicken? And he said, yes of course, duh shit, chicken is always chicken! But then I said, well fine sir, I may have a bone to pick with you there because I know for a fact that chicken is not always chicken, in fact there was a study done recently which was published in the official journal of the National Research Foundation for the Advancement of Chicken Studies in which it was proven quite quantitatively that chicken is not always, I dare say, chicken. La shit, said the Mexican beaver, chicken is always do you have a migraine! Yes, you dumb fuck, what’s your fucking point of course I have fucking migraine why the fuck do you think I’m fucking talking to a Mexican beaver! Well, I declare, he says, the nerve! Schnook! As if a Mexican beaver wasn’t worth talking to! Well, fuck you Mexican beaver, I’m not exactly in the mood for talking and reasoning and shit la shit! I’m racist against Mexican beavers there I said it what the fuck are gonna do you fucking Mexican beaver! I kind of have a problem right now what with this fucking fucking migraine! Migraine migraine migraine you fucking dumbass!

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh shit shit shit shit shit

“Beavers are experts on the chicken industry it is a well-known fact that has been covered up by the national news media

“Fuckshittttttttttttttttt fuck fuck fuck!

“Why can’t you go away and come back another day because that is what I would appreciate!

“La shit la shit la shit!

10:57 AM

On the couch, her right hand pressed firmly into her right eye socket.

Breathing heavily.

“Shit,” she says.

“AiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiisssssssssssssshhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhbaIIIIII.”

11:43 AM

On the couch—the breathing becoming quiescent.

Dozing.

1:12 PM

Pushing up from the couch, Kyin into the kitchen.

Drinking water cold.

Packing her bag. Dressing—jeans, button-up, jacket, sneakers, sunglasses.

Out into the light rain. The darkened midday.

Down Connecticut, on into Dupont—passing clicking heels and cellphone chatter, a woman shaking a cup of change—“Have a heart, help the homeless!” Kyin reaching into her bag and finding a bill, dropping it into the cup—“Thank you, you’re a wonderful woman!”

Into *The Grounds*, ordering a triple flat white. A chair in the corner looking out on Connecticut.

Clicking open her blog.

Cabs honking.

The sound of
firetrucks
navigating the
circle.

Blog, 1:40 PM

Electric. My mind is humming, a current running through it. I am connected to everything. The most wonderful feeling.

Drinking coffee in Dupont.

Post-migraine. That one was a damn workout!

Don’t know why. Had kimchi, rice, egg, coffee for breakfast. Nothing unusual. But I woke up with a headache, felt it all morning. Then suddenly it was too late. Seems like more migraines this year already than the past four years. If this keeps up, I might have to get on migraine pills. I hate those damn things.

Looking out on Connecticut.

Across the street, on a lightpole—a surveillance camera.

Closing her lids, drinking coffee.

2:32 PM

Down into *Second Story Books*. Browsing through the shelves.
Smiling smelling old leather tomes.

4:04 PM

Coming across P Street into Logan Circle.
On a bench sitting reading.
The cars winding up Rhode Island—Vermont.

5:12 PM

Slow moving up 13th Street.
Then stopping, leaning against a tree. Taking out her camera—shooting pictures.
Cars coming up and down the street.

5:27 PM

Across the street—a woman coming out of the apartment building. The woman exits and walks fast down the sidewalk.
The door sliding behind her—slowly—shut.

6:02 PM

A black sedan slows, parking parallel.
“Sabine” exiting from the driver’s side, holding a bag brown.
Legs long gliding.
She steps to the door—sliding her key and entering.
Fast across the street, Kyin grabs the slow-closing door—slides into the foyer.
Hears heels clapping up the stairs.
A row of mailboxes.
Up the stairs—a hallway. Sabine entering the end apartment.
Kyin rushing to the door closed. Makes a note.

Sabine Apartment 4C

8:03 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the AC—to the kitchen for water cold.
Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.
Carrying the computer to the couch.
Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 8:07 PM

In-house cameras:

All Cameras are stationary with color picture and no sound

Jason Green—DC Police Officer: Barry Farm shooting.

Robert Thompson—DC Police Officer: Shooting at Calvert and Connecticut, also

involved with Trinidad checkpoints.

Michael Shelton—DC Police Officer: Shooting at Capitol Hill

Cate Fremd—NSA cryptologist and biometric specialist

Phillip Nolan—US-VISIT (biometric passports and ID stations)

Tracking devices:

GPS tracking via cell phone

Patrick Walker: DC Police Officer: Trinidad shooting. Gettysburg meetings.

The cooing
dove.

Walkers
walking
dogs.

Clicks open *Public Cameras—Trinidad*.

Zooms in, out. Tilts, pans.

Watches.

12:03 AM

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 12:03 AM

Public cameras:

Cameras are able to pan, zoom, and tilt. Each camera is placed at an intersection, allowing me to see up and down both streets. Each camera has a range of about six-hundred meters. Cameras do not have sound. Cameras are color vision during the day; black-and white at night.

Trinidad

Camera 1: Intersection of Montello Avenue and Penn Street

Camera 2: Intersection of Montello Avenue and Morse Street

Camera 3: Intersection of Trinidad Avenue and Oates Street

As of yet, no other neighborhoods (planning on Barry Farm or Park Morton next)

Mr. Dixon/Neighbor 44—MICE. I've not yet figured out a way to deal with Mr. Dixon. I've physically tracked him, but I don't think a device would do any good—even if it would, I'm not sure where I would put it.

Blog, 12:12 AM

It's been pretty dead out in Trinidad for the last half hour or so, so I'm calling it a wrap. This is my first full observation of the area, so I'll provide a full report. After this initial report, I'll keep things brief.

Trinidad

There are a few people that hang out at the same spots regularly, so I will start giving them "names" (jargons). I'm not going to bother detailing the hour-to-hour goings on. I'll just give instead a generalized picture. I need to emphasize that I am aware of the dangers in doing this—summarizing all actions into a few sentences, a story, is a form of jargonization.

A brief description of the layout (this can be found on any map):

Penn Street is the bottom half of a sideways horseshoe (the top half is Holbrook Terrace) intersecting with Montello Avenue, which runs down (one-way street) the length of the neighborhood. Trinidad Avenue runs parallel to Montello running up (one-way street) the neighborhood. Oates Street is just South of Penn Street, running perpendicular to both Montello and Trinidad. Oates, Penn, and Holbrook are parallel.

Camera 1 (Montello and Penn)

Between 8:00 PM and 11:00 PM, I notice the same three young men around the U of the horseshoe, where Penn Street becomes Holbrook Terrace. Note that the camera cannot see the bottom of the U. To make it easy for me to remember, I will name these men after their most prominent articles of clothing—respectively, then: "T-Shirt", "Ballcap", and "Sneakers". "T-shirt" wears a big white t-shirt; "Ballcap" wears a bright red ballcap; and "Sneakers" wears a pair of expensive-looking sneakers. Mostly, these young men just walk around, sometimes sitting in one spot and talking. That is pretty much the sum of their activities. The thing is, these three never leave.

The street itself pretty quiet, with occasional traffic (especially on Montello). A car will park, and someone will go into a house. Or someone will walk in the direction of Gallaudet.

Camera 2 (Montello and Morse)

Camera 2 is just south of Camera 1. Each camera is able to see 600 feet, give or take. So, between the two points, they cover 1200 feet. The distance between the two cameras is roughly 1100 feet. The two cameras, then, overlap for about 100 feet between Morse and Penn.

Morse Street is very close to Florida Avenue, which is not only the border of the neighborhood, but also a major city road.

Blog, 12:43 AM

Almost all of the crime in Adams Morgan happens on the sidestreets just off 18th Street (the main drive, where all the bars are) on Friday and Saturday nights—people walking to their cars, heading home. If you leave Trinidad and cross Florida, you come to the H Street area. H Street is like Adams Morgan, except that it caters to an older crowd (AdMo on the weekends is typically a college-age crowd). Between 9 PM and 11 PM, a few groups of young men moved down Montello, toward Florida (Florida is roughly 400 feet from the camera). Between 10 PM and 11:30 PM, these same young men (7 men total), returned—crossing Florida, heading back into Trinidad. This is one night—a few hours—of observation, so I can't say more than that.

Camera 3 (Trinidad and Oates)

Camera is on Trinidad Avenue, which runs parallel to Montello. Oates Street is fairly quiet. Roads like Trinidad are lined with porch houses. The houses on the East side of Oates Street are not on the road—instead, one has to pull off into the various side streets. Oates Street is mainly a street used for cutting across the neighborhood. Any residential activity near this side of Oates Street, then, does not take place on the Street itself—rather, just off the street, outside of camera range.

The West side of Oates Street and Trinidad Avenue both have a similar layout. East Oates Street is lined with porch houses (nice looking houses). It is also lined with parked cars (both sides of the street). Trinidad Avenue has pretty much the same layout, the only difference being that Trinidad is a one-way street (all parked cars face the same direction). Trinidad also is a tree-lined avenue—it has more shadowed areas outside of the camera's line-of-sight.

Both streets, then (excepting the East side of Oates Street), have people parking cars, people walking to their homes. This activity is ongoing until, I would say, roughly 9:30—10:00 PM.

Around 10:20—11:30 PM, Trinidad and Oates both become different streets. They are both very quiet, save for the passing vehicle. Nothing much happened on these streets—but it is interesting to note how quiet they both became—not only in comparison to the hours prior to 10 PM, but also in comparison to Montello, Morse, Penn, and Florida—all of which remain fairly active streets (kids running around, etc). Most the activity for these camera was cars driving and a few people walking to get where they were going. Very simply, the design of the Street itself is not conducive to anything more than getting from point A to B.

This was just to provide a general overview of the area.
I'm tired.

Shutting down the computer.
To the bed, pulling up the blankets.
Sleeping.

Friday, September 25th
Sunny, 80°
11:04 AM

Institutional brick. Walking through the doors into the waiting room.
Filling out the clipboard forms—waiting.
11:37 AM

The nurse taking Kyin to a bed, handing her a gown.
“Please put this on,” she says. “The doctor will be with you shortly.”
The nurse then turning, pulling behind herself the curtain shut.
Kyin unbuttoning her shirt, looking at the blue flowers on cotton. Unhooking her bra.
The sound of footsteps, voices, coughing.
Untying her shoes and stepping out. Sliding off her socks.
Tugging down her jeans.
Looking at the curtain—the sound of heels and boots, voices.
The gown over her head, down over her form.

11:52 AM
The doctor coming through the curtain, the nurse behind.
“Hello, Kyin, how are you?”
Standing shrugging Kyin.
“Ok,” she says.
The doctor holding out his palm. “That’s alright,” he says, “go ahead and sit back down.
Now I want to explain the procedure to you once more, ok?”
“What we’re gonna do, we’re gonna—first we’ll have you lay down here, as soon as I’m
done explaining this, ok—right? Then, Nurse Qiu here will bring you into the operating
room and we’ll—I’ll start working on you, ok—right?”
“So, first we’ll anesthetize you, that’ll make it so you don’t feel anything, and then what
we’ll do, we’ll—I’ll just make a tiny incision in your hand, ok—right?”

“So—what we’ll—I’ll be doing is just putting a little piece of plastic—what’s called artificial bone—attaching it to your bones, ok—right?”

“And with that plastic, we’ll have some other stuff, which will make your bone even stronger than it was before—strontium—which is basically a really strong metal that your body thinks is calcium—and then all we—all I have to do is close it up, and that’s it.

“You’ll have to wear a cast for a few more weeks, but after that it’ll be back to normal. Ok, so—any questions?”

Arms in her lap—shaking her head. “No,” she says.

The doctor nodding. “Ok,” he says, “so, go ahead and lie back, and I’ll see you in the OR.”

The doctor turning and pulling behind himself the curtain shut.

12:20 PM

Into the operating room. The nurses lift Kyin onto the table.

They stand, surrounding her body with bright lights, wearing masks and gloves, gowns.

The doctor pulling down his mask, holding his hand open toward the doctor to his left.

“Hi, Kyin? This is Doctor Wilson—she’s an anesthesiologist—she’ll be putting you to sleep, ok? I’ll see you when you wake up, ok?”

Kyin nodding looking at the doctor looking at her.

The anesthesiologist stands beside Kyin.

“Ok, Kyin, this is real easy. I’m just going to put this over your mouth, and all you have to is breathe.”

She places a mask over Kyin’s mouth.

“Now, just count back from ten, ok?”

Nodding Kyin. “Ten, nine, eight, seven,” she says.

Sleeping.

The anesthesiologist turns, looking at a screen; turning again to look at the surgeon—nodding.

“Alright,” says the surgeon.

Looking down at Kyin’s hand.

The nurse hands the surgeon a scalpel.

The doctor cutting open Kyin’s hand. Another nurse cleaning the blood. The anesthesiologist standing watching.

The first nurse wiping the surgeon’s brow.

The doctor peeling back the skin—pinning the flaps—revealing the bones.

"Look at this," he says.

The nurses, the anesthesiologist looking.

"The bones are shattered—how did she do this?" says the doctor, looking up at the anesthesiologist.

"No wonder it wouldn't heal," he says.

The anesthesiologist shaking her head. Then turning to look at the screen.

"She's doing fine," she says.

"Good," says the surgeon.

"I have some cleaning up to do. I'm gonna have to replace almost all of this."

The doctor cuts dorsal ligaments—pushing aside muscles, clamping them away from the bone.

The second nurse takes a photograph of the bone fragments.

"It almost looks like her hand was hit by a bullet," says the first nurse.

The doctor nodding.

The first nurse hands the doctor a pair of small forceps. The doctor picking out pieces of broken bone, placing them on the surgical towel.

"Ok," he says, "I think that's all of them."

Looking up at the nurse.

"What a mess," he says.

The second nurse taking a photograph of the hand.

The doctor then inserts several pieces of plastic—notching them, fitting them, screwing them—clamping them each down with several screws.

"This should hold," he says.

The second nurse taking a photograph of the attached grafts.

2:45 PM

In bed, Kyin wearing a cast.

Listening to the clicking shoes, the various voices cacophonous.

Starting at the pattered curtain.

5:02 PM

On the bus, riding into Dupont.

Slow stepping off, walking toward Connecticut. The crowded sidewalk.

Bodies moving toward and down the Metro escalators—above, a quote etched in stone.

Thus in silence in dreams' projections, returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals; the hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand, I sit by the restless all dark night - some are so young; some suffer so much - I recall the experience sweet and sad...

Climbing up the hill, stepping into Rite Aid.

The bright humming lights, the narrow aisles.

Opening a cooler, grabbing a milk chocolate. Closing the door and squeezing against the glass, letting a woman pass.

Down again the aisles. Grabbing a bag of chips.

To the counter, paying.

Outside sitting on the concrete, opening the milk, the bag.

Drinking eating—watching the cars speed up and down Connecticut.

Clicking heels and slapping loafers.

Two women stand at the crosswalk, waiting for the light.

“I know, right? It’s like he doesn’t even get why he’s being prosecuted.”

“I don’t know what to believe, honestly. Dan was saying that—oh, there’s the light.”

A man, woman, and two children coming down the hill.

The boy running. “Hurry before the light changes—Mom!”

“Oh,” says the Mom, “Look—only ten more seconds—let’s go!”

The milk running down her throat. Crunching chips.

Kyin rubbing her eyes. Standing, throwing the bottle, the bag in a can.

Moving up Connecticut.

A man in a wheelchair holding a cup of change. Grabbing a bill from her pocket—stuffing it into the cup. The man smiles, nods at smiling Kyin nodding.

5:44 PM

Into the apartment, to the AC—to the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

To the bathroom, her period coming out.

“Shit,” she says.

Throwing the underwear into the bathtub.

Over to the dresser, grabbing a new pair; then standing to the medicine cabinet, grabbing a pad—placing it along the bottom of her underwear.

Cleaning her hands.

Makes a call.

Cell, 5:47 PM

Mom: Hello?

Kyin: Hey, Mom. Are you busy?

Mom: Uh—no, that's ok—what's wrong?

Kyin: Nothing. Just checking in.

Mom: Oh, ok.

Kyin: I just wanted to talk about your day or—something like that, ok? Did you make any new clients today?

Mom: Are you sick or something? You sound tired.

Kyin: Well, I just—I just had surgery. On my hand.

Mom: What? You had—what? Why didn't you tell me? I didn't know your hand is that bad—why didn't you tell me?

Kyin: I know, Mom. That's why I'm calling you, ok? I just feel kind of drained. It must be the—I don't know what it was they had me on.

Mom: Why don't you come here? I will pick you up, ok?

Kyin: No, that's alright. Maybe this weekend or something. Thanks, Mom—I gotta go.

On the couch, covering her eyes.

Closing her lids.

Dozing.

Sunday, September 27th

Cloudy, 70°

11:00 AM

Looking at the computer screen—the various cameras.

Scanning, panning, tilting, zooming.

5:05 PM

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 4:05 PM

My first weekend watching Trinidad.

Bicycles up and down the road. Cars continuously moving.

People out walking talking.

Bright day.

A group sitting in front of a house on west Oates Street—some on the stairs, some the porch. The adults sit and talk while kids run around. A few young girls are standing off to the side. One of the girls is obviously the leader of the group—she tells the other girls what to do, and they listen to her. The girls will stand in a circle and start dancing.

Then the lead girl (I call her “Imari”) she will stop the other girls in the middle of the song, and I imagine her saying, “No, you’re doing it wrong!” because she does not look too happy. And, wow, those other girls listen to every word that Imari says—she is the boss!

One of the girls is much younger than the other three—I call her “Anisa”. She’s my favorite. Anisa—the other girls will be singing, with Imari leading the way, and Anisa will just be standing there, holding her hands under her chin, swaying from side to side. She is the cutest little girl! She goes up to a man that’s standing leaning over the porch, and says something—and he continues talking—she says something again—and he looks down and says something back to her, pats her on the head—then she goes running inside.

Montello/Penn/Morse

Montello is mostly cars moving, a few people walking. A police cruiser drives by twice. Montello is a little different than Oates and Trinidad—it has a few sections of porch-houses, but they are not as uniform as those other streets. There are also sections of long buildings, empty lots, etc. Constantly people walking, bikes, cars. A bright early autumn sunny day. At Montello and Morse there’s a big recreation center (I didn’t notice it in the dark the other night), but I think it must be closed on Sundays. A few people were hanging out on the steps outside. I’ve suddenly grown tired and need to eat something.

Email Inbox, 4:20 PM

From: Anisa

Dear Choi,

I woke up last night in the middle of the night panicked. Then I remembered about your hand surgery. I forgot to say anything to you! I checked and you were not at 4Humours.

I really hope you are doing alright, and I just wanted to let you know that I am worried about you.

Please take care of yourself,

Your friend,

Anisa

Checks her email.

Email Outbox, 4:23 PM

To: Anisa

Anisa,

That was a really sweet email. You made me feel good. But please, don't worry about me—I'm fine.

The surgery was pretty good. I was exhausted the day-of and yesterday, but I feel pretty good now. Who knows if it works—I hope so. The doctor was telling me that my bones were all smashed to bits. Anyway, I'm fine. I'll stop by tonight, hope you're there.

Your friend,

Choi

Into the kitchen, opening the refrigerator—leaning looking. Pulling out drawers, lifting up an apple—smelling.

Sandals, keys, bag.

Down and out—up to Columbia—*Kimhap*.

Looking over the plastic packages of banchan.

Looking at the menu hanging behind the counter, the girl smiling.

“Do you have ddeokbokki?”

The girl nodding smiling. “It’s spicy,” she says.

“Good,” says Kyin. “So—I’ll take some of that, some rice—and this energy drink.”

5:15 PM

Coming into the apartment, placing the bag on the coffeetable. To the kitchen, grabbing a bowl, chopsticks, napkins.

Clicks on the television.

Commentary Show, 5:18 PM

Host: Ok, we’re back. Switching topics: US and South Korean government websites were again crippled today, for most of the day, as hackers flooded their systems. So this has been happening more and more often, and they speculate it was North Korea. So, what do you two think? Oh, ok—we’re bringing in a computer expert for this one—this is Cindy Bream, she’s works for us, and she’s an, let me see here—oh, you’re an ex-NSA analyst, is that right? So, ok—Taylor, I’m gonna ask you first—ok, first, is this North Korea? And if so, is this—what’s the deal with them? They shoot missiles into the ocean, submarine attacks, they cyberattack us, I mean—what’ll we do about them?

Taylor: Well, first of all, I think he’ll die before the end of the year. Second of all, I don’t think North Korea has the capability for this kind of attack, they—

Host: Hold on a second, Taylor, that sounds like a technical question—what about it, Cindy—do they have the capability to do this? Is this something that’s difficult to do? Do you need to be a—is this easy to do?

Cindy: I wouldn’t say it’s easy, no. I would say that, first of all, it’s impossible to know this quickly who did it. So, any speculation you hear right now is just—I don’t know what it is.

Host: Ok, Taylor?

Jack: Can I add something real quick?

Host: Sure, go ahead, Jack.

Jack: If—I mean, when Kim Jong Il dies—that’s another question, dealing with his successor. But I just wanted to add on to what Cindy said. I think that there are these already preformed ideas of who’s doing these attacks, so people are just coming out and saying it’s North Korea—really that just shows their own bias, because they have no way of knowing.

Taylor: Well, I think Cindy covered that. Fine, if you wanna call it conjecture, then I am conjecturing that North Korea does not have—

Host: What about it, Cindy—do they have the capability? We never got to that.

Feet on the
table.

Gnawing,
slurping the
dduk.

Cracking open
the energy
drink—sipping.

Commentary Show, 5:20 PM

Cindy: Ok, so—so, first of all, this is really hard to describe, but—ok, in North Korea most citizens don't even have access to cellphones, ok? I mean—that's hard to imagine, right? And not everyone has landlines—I mean, there are a lot of people there with no access to even a regular telephone. So, to even begin speaking about quote hackers, I mean, we need to think about that for a second. No cellphones. No telephones. So, ok, to be a quote hacker—actually, I prefer the term cyberterrorist—so—ok, some people can just learn how to do this on their own, but that's pretty rare—you really need teachers, you need to learn how to be a cyberterrorist. It's like—like learning to play piano—you can get pretty far on your own, but eventually, if you want to get anywhere, you need a teacher.

Cindy: So, for instance, we know that in some African countries—mostly South Africa—well, my point is, that in order to be able to accomplish something like this, you would need some sort of training system in place, but more than that—so, ok, what we have is—North Korea will claim that they have a quote elite team of hackers, or something like that—which is really a meaningless phrase—

Host: But we don't have training systems—and we have plenty of hackers in the US, right?

Cindy: Well—ok, that's both right and wrong—that's what I was getting to, because in a way, we do have training systems. Well, no—not in a way—we do, plain and simple. First of all, it's a part of our culture—that's what—with the cellphones—what I was trying to say. A telephone culture cannot breed computer children, ok? In a country like North Korea, it's not like here where every citizen is being raised in an internet culture. It's from birth, right? It's part of our life. Kids talk to other kids via text messaging and email and whatnot. It's ingrained. So—that just doesn't happen in North Korea. No cellphones, right? So—you can't—a person can't just absorb that in a short—have you ever tried teaching someone over 80 years of age how to use email?—so, you can't absorb what's not out there, what's not a part of the culture—so, ok, there's that—and, I mean, every college here has degrees in computer science, computer programmers are everywhere—and there are even degrees in cryptology and—

Commentary Show, 5:27 PM

Host: There are?

Cindy: Yes—and, of course, we have the NSA, and also, you know subcontractors—so, ok, our government will go to hacking competitions—actually, our government will sponsor these competitions—and, actually, it's usually China and Russia that win these things—and the NSA will go there and recruit these college kids—and they are, they're usually just kids, and the NSA will pay them well to come work for them. So, ok, it's—it's almost impossible to explain the difference, the difficulty—sometimes South Korea and even our own intelligence will claim that the North has these quote elite units, but—it would be like, like—

Host: Alright, so—yes, you're right, Jack—this is all just conjecture, but—ok, that's what we're doing here, but also sometimes conjecture gets you somewhere—but also, ok, I have to ask, Tyrone what do you think of reports claiming that the US government is just saying that this is North Korea as a means both to drum up anti-North Korean sentiment and to—so the President can gain support for his new NSA/Cybersecurity legislation.

Tyrone: Ok, here's what I really think: one of two things will happen—and we need to think here in terms of war metaphors—because, in all actuality, this is a kind of terrorism, this is the methodology of guerrilla warfare. Either there will be a hacking or internet or whatever you want to call it—a cyber version of 9/11, a major implosion of the internet, something that will scare not just computer-savvy people, but the average citizen—or, ok, nothing will happen.

Muting the screen.

Carrying trash, the bowl to the kitchen—cleaning.

Flat on the couch.

Dozing.

Monday, September 28th

Clear, 62 °

12:36 AM

“What?”—up from the couch.

“Oh,” says Kyin.

Into the kitchen, looking at the clock.

From the fridge, milk—into a mug, the microwave.

Mugged chai, the computer to the couch.

Clicks open chat.

Clicks open—*Public
cameras—Trinidad.*

Doves and crows.

Drunk voices down
below.

4Humours, 12:43 AM

Anima: Hey, Choi! How are you, are you ok?

Energy: Hey, Anima. Yes, thank you. I feel fine.

Antarctica: Energy, good to see you. Were you sick or something?

Kindheart: Hello, Energy.

Energy: No, I wasn't exactly sick, Ant. I broke my hand, and it wouldn't heal, and it was taking forever to heal—so I just had surgery, a bone graft. So I'm back with a cast, and we'll see what happens. But I feel fine. Were you talking about anything?

Anima: I'm glad you're ok.

Kindheart: Just going over insomnia and medication, things like that. Did you have a topic in mind, Energy?

Energy: I—oh, why not. Ok—hmmm. Let me think about this.

Anima: No pressure, Choi.

Antarctica: Energy, let me just say, from the bottom of my heart—I am bored out of my insomniac mind. So, pretty please, I don't care if it's a dark secret or a great recipe for potato soup—pleeeeeeease give us something to talk about.

Energy: Ok, so. Yes. Right. Alriiiiiiiiiiiiiight, ok. So, ok, my brother, right. That's why I first came here, right? So I may as well talk about him—I mean, that's why I came. So, my brother's been missing for—for about 3 months. And, I'm starting to get really worried. That probably sounds weird—I mean, I know it does, because we waited over a month to report him missing, and when we did report it, the cop gave me a look like, “Are you fucking crazy? Your brother's been missing a month and you're just now reporting it? You are a shitty sister.” But—well. It's hard to explain.

Kindheart: Does your brother have a history of going missing?

Energy: Yees—I'll say. Well done, KH, good guess. Or, I guess that's a common thing? Someone repeatedly going missing?

Kindheart: No, I really don't know. I just guessed because you seem to love your brother very much, so I knew you must've had a good reason for not reporting him missing.

Energy: Yeah, so—well, now, in retrospect, it seems stupid to've waited so long. Now we've reported it, and the police, they seem helpful enough, they've put him in a database, so now he'll sit in that database and wait for data to appear.

4Humours, 1:11 AM

Anima: I'm really sorry to hear about your brother, Choi. Wherever he is, I hope he's safe and doing well, and I hope you hear back from him soon.

Kindheart: Energy, I wonder if I can ask a few questions. Does your brother take medication? Do you think it's a possibility that your brother is now homeless? Where did he go before?

Energy: Questions 1 and 2 are typical DOCTOR questions. Where did he go before, the detective asked me that—he claimed he went to—Korea. And I never believed him—until recently, when I had a conversation with my mother about something. So—yes, I guess a little part of me is wondering if he did go to Korea.

Antarctica: I completely agree, those are DOCTOR questions. Yuck. Actually, now I'm wondering about the homeless question—where'd that come from?

Enter Kore

Anima: Welcome, Kore.

Kindheart: Welcome, Kore. I still don't know what "doctor" questions are. I guess you're saying that because I am a doctor I can't see what kind of questions are typical "doctor" questions? But I haven't been a doctor for that long. I asked if he was homeless, because often if someone is mentally ill and they go missing, they end up homeless. This is because we no longer put as many people into extended-stay mental hospitals. Thirty-fourty years ago, we put many more people into extended-stay hospitals—now, because of de-institutionalization, hospital stays are short, and we push them back out onto the street.

Energy: Ah, fuck that. I'm sorry, KH, I really have mixed feelings about this, because you seem really nice and well-intentioned, but everything you say sounds like its coming from The Doctrine of the Medical Community, or whatever—and that just pisses me off. Do you really not know what a DOCTOR question is? Because if you don't, then that's just sad—maybe already you're too far gone. You've become wholly and completely jargonized. If you ask about pills or medication, that is always a doctor question, ok? If you ask about pattern of behavior, that is a doctor question.

Kore: Wow, this sounds like a heated debate.

Antarctica: Not that heated. This is old hat for us, Kore. I hate doctors, too. What brings you here?

Anima: I have not spent much time with doctors, so I do not much about how they think.

Kindheart: What are some more doctor questions. I will write them all down so that I will never ask them again.

Kore: Ok, so my husband has been saying for years I can be a manipulative bitch—of course, he doesn't use those words, so finally something happened, and I went to see a therapist, and she says that he's right—

Looking over the streets of Trinidad.

A car moves across the screen, moving up Trinidad.

The same car comes out of Holbrook Terrace, turning left onto Montello—fast speeding past Penn, Morse, Florida, out into the dark, out of the cameras' reach.

4Humours, 1:36 AM

Kore: of course, she doesn't just come out and say that, she's nice about it, but after a few visits, I suddenly realize, "Hey, she's saying that I'm a manipulative bitch!" And, so of course that made me mad, but now I'm wondering, great, have I been a manipulative bitch my whole life? So that's where I'm at.

Anima: Is your therapist saying that this behavior is because of mental illness, Kore? Or what is she saying exactly? That you need to change? That she agrees with your husband?

Antarctica: The most well-known question: "How does that make you feel?" But now, because that question has become so well-known, it's been replaced: "What do you think about that?" "What is your opinion on that?" "Do you feel when you think about that?" "Do you think that you should think anything about that?" "Or should you not think anything about that?" "What would your mother say about that?" "What would your father say about that?"

Kore: Kore is my real name. I didn't know we were supposed to make up names. What, is it supposed to protect my identity? I could care less if people know who I am. No one I know is gonna come here. No, my therapist never says anything outright, she just gives me hints and all that. So I never realized what she was trying to say until I'm driving home. But I think she's "saying" (without saying) that, yes, my husband is right, that I am a manipulative bitch.

Kindheart: What was your childhood like, Kore? Do you think either of your parents would agree with your husband? And, can I ask, if your husband didn't "come out and say" that you were a manipulative bitch, then what did he say, what were his exact words?

Energy: Oh, ok, sorry. Kore is a pretty name, though. Sometimes I agree with you about the "real names," thing—I mean, no one that I know would come to this forum. My real-life last name is Choi. Just to be fair.

Kore: My husband says, "You always do this, you whine and cry and yell just to get what you want, no matter what it is, no matter how wrong you are," or something like that. And he kept saying it over and over, and then he was yelling it, which is really unusual for my husband. He is a very very very quiet man. So I was pretty well stunned. He never does anything like that.

4Humours, 2:00 AM

Kore: My mom and I fought when I was in high school, but that's about it. My dad keeps to himself.

Antarctica: Step one: establishing patient history. "Choi," huh? That sounds familiar. So, ok, just to pry a little, that means the country your brother might or might not have went back to was Korea, correct? (Thank you, internet.)

Anima: Do you have any siblings, Kore?

Energy: Ha, that's a perfect example. So now, yes, because of my last name, you all know I'm Korean. So that doesn't matter, but still, it's something. Yes, he said he went back to (South)Korea.

Energy: Kore—that's an interesting name—why did you choose it? Some more doctor questions: "Would you like to try this new medication—I was just given some free samples?" "Why don't you exercise more?" Help me out here, Ant—I know you've got some.

Kore: No, I don't have any siblings. Something weird, though, I just found out recently that my Mom had a miscarriage before she had me. That was some weird news. I didn't know what to say to that. But, no, I grew up just me.

Antarctica: Yes, I'm sorry to hear about your brother, too, Choi—can I call you that now? Yeah, I guess sometimes we get into a rhythm in here and forget to actually offer support. It's like we're solving a damn math problem or something—that damn doctor mentality, it sucks you in.

Kindheart: Actually, that is a very interesting piece of information, Kore. Up until very recently, miscarriages have been "swept under the rug," which means that they are just something that people, including doctors, "just don't talk about." So, there has never really been—and, really, there still isn't—a culturally defined way to deal with miscarriage. I'm sure your mother went through that, not knowing what to feel, and then having to cover it up, not talking about it—or, at most, maybe talking about it with very people close to her. It's only very recently that our culture is beginning to acknowledge that this is something that we should talk about, that we should comfort these women and acknowledge their loss rather than sweeping it under the rug. Although, it should be said that some women still prefer to not talk about it—and even some women, perhaps because of the long cultural history, will act as if they don't care, as if nothing happened.

Energy: Sure, call me Choi. See, this is where I get confused about you KH. Because even though it sounds like you're reading from the latest medical opinions on miscarriages, you still make some interesting and caring observations. My first question, Kore: can you think of times, looking back now, when you manipulated your husband over something trivial? Did you do this often? What about, did your husband ever manipulate you?

4Humours, 2:29 AM

Energy: You say he's "very very quiet," but I've met very very quiet people that are skilled manipulators. I don't think manipulation has to do with being loud or quiet.

Anima: Yes, I have known some quiet people that are sneaky. I am also curious about your father, Kore. But I want you to know that we are not interrogating you. There is no pressure here. If you want us to talk about something else, we will gladly change the subject.

Kore: I don't mind the questions, that's why I came here. Ask away. If my husband ever manipulated me, then he's very skillful and I'm still none the wiser. I mean, I'm sure he has, everyone has once, right? My husband is very organized and very quiet. And sometimes he's very frustrating because he's very organized and very quiet. He has lists for everything, and he has explanations for everything. Sometimes I don't want a damn explanation, ok! Sometimes I don't want a list! I just want to wing it, ok! And he's also very patient. He just sits there, thinking. Which is why I was so surprised when he exploded like that.

Antarctica: Maybe this is just a new stage in your relationship, Kore. If you haven't already, ask your friends about this, ask them to be honest and tell you if you're a manipulative bitch. They know you better than we do, and also better than your therapist does. Unless of course you've lost all your friends because you're a manipulative bitch. (In case you hadn't noticed, I'm enjoying saying "manipulative bitch".)

Kindheart: I would agree with that Antarctica, and add that maybe you shouldn't be seeing a therapist but instead a couples counselor. Would your husband be open to that, Kore?

Energy: Manipulative bitch. Hmm, yes, it does roll off the tongue, doesn't it?

Kore: Oh no, look what I started. My husband see a counselor? No, I don't think so. See, I've thought about that, and I was just worried that. Ok, you don't know my husband, but he always wins every damn argument even though "I always get what I want." It's hard to explain. But if he came to counseling, I know he would just logically explain everything to the therapist and I would look like a damn dumbass who just grunts and screams and cries. So then what? What's the point of therapy if all I end up doing is agreeing with my husband because he's so damn perfect?

Antarctica: Sounds like there's a story there, Anima. Am I allowed to apply pressure? Is this a pressure situation?

Kindheart: You don't need to feel that way, Kore. If you find a therapist that is only siding with one of you, then most likely they are not a good therapist. Sometimes it takes time finding a therapist that can work with both of you. But the point is, you don't need to feel as if bringing your husband to a counseling session will mean that they will gang up on you.

4Humours, 2:45 AM

Energy: Hey, watch it Ant. That's my buddy you're picking on. So, is that the solution for everything, KH? Either, "Go see a counselor/therapist/psychologist/psychiatrist/psychoanalyst," or "Take your medicine"?

Kindheart: Obviously, you can tell from our conversation that the others here don't agree with me. Kore, I just ask you to consider my advice, ok? Talk to your husband and honestly tell him how you feel. You should even tell him that you went to a chatroom and were wondering if maybe your therapist was right about you. That's my advice. Energy, I think we've discussed this, I think chatrooms are just waystations, places where people can go to the next stage of healing, which is usually a doctor or medication.

Antarctica: I'm really loving that Choi is doing all the doctor-bashing for me.

Anima: Maybe some other time, Ant. I do not mind him asking, Choi. It is just Ant, he is harmless.

Antarctica: Zing!

Kore: You sound very logical, Kindheart, but I'm still not so sure about bringing my husband along. Ah, who knows? If I'm a manipulative bitch—ugh. I don't know, I need to think about this, I guess.

On the screen,
a police cruiser
is coming up
Trinidad—lights
flashing—
turning left
onto Queen
Street.

Closing chat.

Watching the cameras—panning, zooming.

The streets quiet.

3:02 AM

On the screen: an ambulance speeding up Trinidad Avenue—lights flashing—turning left onto Queen.

3:12 AM

On the screen: The ambulance briefly flashing coming out of Holbrook Terrace, across Montello.

3:20 AM

Packing her bag.

Coming down and out, up to Connecticut—jogging down to Florida, the hotels.

Coming to a cab sitting outside the Hilton, she knocks on the window.

"I need to get to Florida and West Virginia," she says.

The man eyeing her—nodding.

3:37 AM

Walking up West Virginia past Morse, fields of green Gallaudet on the left.

A dark tree-lined avenue.

Past Oates, turning right onto Holbrook Terrace—pulling out her camera.

Passing 11th Street, she turns down an alley, cutting across.

3:47 AM

Outside a row of houses, a police cruiser. A police officer walking stretching tape.

Kyin shooting.

The man looks up at the flash, at Kyin—Officer Jason Green.

Kyin continues shooting. The man furrows his brow, then continues unrolling the tape.

Kyin taking out her recorder, walking up to the officer.

“Ma’am—please step back.”

“Do you have a name for the victim?”

“What victim, ma’am? Please step back, ok?”

Looking up at her holding the recorder.

“So there wasn’t a victim? Who was the shooter?”

The other officer coming forward. Kyin shooting.

“Who is this?”

“She’s a reporter, looks like,” says Officer Green.

Kyin walks around the edge of the tape, shooting the front of the house. On the pavement, a pool of blood.

Another cruiser drives up, and Officer Green enters the house.

4:10 AM

A newsvan parks, a reporter exiting and walking up to the tape.

Kyin shoots the reporter.

The reporter walking up to Kyin. “What the hell are you doing?” she asks.

Kyin shooting.

“Your boss is gonna hear of this, ok? You’re being a bitch—who do you work for?”

Kyin turns back to the house, watching. Behind the tape, an officer is placing yellow numbers over bullet shells.

“You won’t last long here,” says the reporter, walking back to the van.

4:17 AM

Officer Jason Green walks through the tape, heading toward a cruiser.

Kyin following behind, holding out her recorder. "Excuse me," she says. "Who was the victim?"

"Call the main office," he says, "There'll be a press release."

Turning to her, "Don't you know how this works?"

Kyin shooting his face—his head turning away.

"Officer Green," she says, "weren't you involved in a shooting across the river just over a month ago? How is it that you're already back on duty?"

He looks at her—then raises his gaze, looking behind her.

"Who told you my name?" he asks.

"I covered that shooting," says Kyin. "Why did you shoot that man in Barry Farm? Why were you reassigned to this neighborhood? Why were you cleared so quickly? Who was the victim here tonight? Was it another young man? Why are so many young men being shot by police?"

He moves toward her—looking at her camera, the recorder in her palm.

Then turns and steps into the cruiser, shutting the door—begins talking on the radio.

Kyin shooting through the window.

4:27 AM

Again standing at the tape, the TV-reporter comes up to Kyin. "I don't know who you are," she says, "But the police will never talk to you if you keep it up."

Kyin looking at her talking.

The woman continuing, "This business is about give and take," she says. "Building relationships—trust."

Nodding Kyin. "Ok," she says.

Then shoots a picture of the woman.

6:11 AM

Coming down Ashmead, passing dog-walkers and morning joggers.

Ahead, next to the trashcan—Mr. Dixon standing smoking holding his leash, his dog.

Kyin stops, then leans against a tree.

The phone rings—he answers.

Kyin listens—shoots a picture of Mr. Dixon.

6:32 AM

Into the apartment.

To the kitchen, making coffee. Turning on the AC.

Clicks on the news.

News, 7:04 AM

Female Anchor: And another shooting down in Trinidad, the victim, Leon Johnson, here pictured, was found dead in an apartment on Holbrook Terrace. Police have no leads, and are asking local residents to come forward if they know anything.

Make Anchor: That's a tragedy. Next up, the weather.

Weatherwoman: That's right, we're looking forward to a few beautiful light Fall days coming up. I'll give you the details after the break, along with your five-day forecast.

Cracking open an egg.

Placing on the plate: rice, egg, ketchup, and cheese.

The coffee mugged.

Carrying the food, the drink to the couch.

Muting the screen.

7:15 AM

Coming out from the bathroom dried.

To the computer, clicking open her blog.

Clicking open—*Cameras—House—Jason Green*.

Blog, 7:15 AM

Around 1:40 AM, a car sped up Trinidad—then a little later, came out of Holbrook Terrace and sped down Montello. So, it's hard to say what happened. Maybe I should've put cameras on Holbrook instead of Penn Street. But it wouldn'tve mattered anyway, because the shooting was in an alleyway. So, ok—it was either the first car, or the cops. Or, I suppose it could've been both. My gut tells me no matter what it will be reported as a driveby. The Trinidad cameras are not recorded, so I can't rewind and look back after the fact.

Around 2:40 AM, a DC Police cruiser sped up Trinidad with lights flashing. A little later, an ambulance followed behind. So I went down there and took some pictures. Down there was Officer Jason Green, working the scene. I have no idea what he was doing in that neighborhood. I thought he worked in Anacostia. I asked him some questions, and he looked pretty pissed, like he wanted to punch me—but we were close to the other officers and the TV-reporter, so. Ms. TV-reporter, as far as I'm concerned, is part of the problem. She says to me, "You need to learn how this business works. How to develop a relationship with the police." That, quite frankly, disgusts me.

Blog, 8:01 AM

I don't want a "relationship" with the police. I don't want a relationship with anybody—not with other reporters feeding me information, not with a news "business" whose job is to make money, with flashy headlines and talking about the weather and traffic reports, spending only 10 goddamn seconds on someone's fucking death.

TEN SECONDS ON SOMEONE'S DEATH AND TEN MINUTES ON THE FUCKING WEATHER

God, when she—when she said that, wow, I was really angry, I was fuming. But I just took pictures of her, and then she was angry, fuming. She was only there for maybe 15, 20 minutes. Then she left. Why would she need to stay? The DC Police will give her the story to write.

And I watched the news this morning, they didn't even show that reporter—they just summed up the murder in a few seconds.

I'm watching Jason Green's house, but he's not home yet. This is late for him, so. I dunno.

Clicks open her email.

Email Outbox, 8:26 AM

To: Fiela

Hey,

Let's do something Friday at your place, just the two of us.

Or Tisha, too, if she's there.

Peace

On the screen, Officer Jason Green entering his house. He throws his hat onto the floor and punches the wall.

Pacing the living room.

Then quietly walking upstairs.

Kyin to the kitchen for coffee.

Looking at the television.

Carrying the computer to the couch. Looking at the screens.

Friday, October 2nd

Clouds, 60°

7:10 PM

In the living room, Tisha pouring from a bottle of cabernet.

Coming to Kyin.

"I've never seen you—do you ever drink wine?" she asks.

"Sometimes—here," says Kyin, reaching for the bottle. She reads the label.

"Some kinds of red give me a migraine, so—ok, see here—just to be safe, I don't really drink wines with high tannin levels—I really don't know why, but they tend to give me migraines."

Handing the bottle back to Tisha.

Fiela with legs folded, sitting across the room.

They sit and drink and talk.

9:10 PM

"I thought you were still in school," says Kyin.

Tisha sitting straight. "I—oh, you mean taking classes? Just one—on Wednesdays."

Nodding Fiela. "She hates it."

"No— it just wasn't— isn't what I thought it'd be."

Nodding Kyin.

Tisha holding her palms out flat. "I had this plan," she says. "I'm teaching my kids photography. So. I signed up for a photography class. I wanted these two—my day classes and my night class to kind of work together.

"So—during the day, I work with the kids, and—but we can't afford expensive cameras, so we would just have those little throwaway things, right?"

Fiela to the kitchen.

"So—the course I'm taking, it's more about digital photography and—how digital photography changes photography and—so, it ended up being. I would take the kids on these little walks around the neighborhood, and they would take snapshots, just to get a feel for using a camera.

"No, it was weird, we, one day we went downtown, and we were all taking pictures of these buildings all day long, the White House, the Capitol, and—these guys—they come

up and tell my kids—these guys in these black suits, with badges. That they—that my kids can't take pictures of those buildings.

"I mean, these kids were looking at me like they thought we were going to jail or something!"

Drinking Kyin. "What happened?"

Nodding Tisha. "Right. So they asked me all these questions—my name, where we're from—we're right down the road! Like we're—like my damn kids are secret spies or something!

"So we—he asked us to delete the photographs, but we—hello!—they were just those crappy little cameras, right?

"So that was it, they left, but—my kids were scared shitless."

Leaning Kyin. "I bet," she says. "But they didn't make you throw the cameras away—they just—what was the point?"

Nodding drinking. "Right? I don't know! And—so, ok, that happened, and the same day—that night I go to class. And they're all talking about how photography no longer has any relation to reality because digital photographs can be manipulated.

"And I'm sitting there—thinking—*what the fuck are you talking about?*

"It was giving me a headache—I just was getting so frustrated with all these hipster intellectuals all sitting there telling me photography has no connection—what? Are you real live?

"Tell that to those men in those suits. Tell that to my kids."

Drinking shaking her head.

Fiela returning sitting.

"She hates that class," she says. "She always comes home angry."

Tisha sitting up—sipping. "Yeah—I do," she says, "because these people have no clue about the world, they just, they're so damn. Now, I know—I can sit back and say—alright, digital photography can be manipulated. But to erase the world?

"And that's what they always do. For every argument, they always go down the furthest road possible—some fantasy world. They just—they need to come out into the real world."

A song playing—Kyin answering her ringing phone.

Cell, 9:22 PM

Kyin: Cate?

Cate: Hey—am I bothering you?

Kyin: No, what's up?

Cate: Just seeing—if you want to hang out.

Kyin: I'm over at Fiela's right now. How about later tonight—
or tomorrow?

Cate: Oh, ok—just stop by whenever, ok?

Kyin: Alright, bye.

Cate: Bye.

Fiela and Tisha sitting
quiet.

Fiela drinking. "Cate?"
she says.

Nodding Kyin looking at Fiela and Tisha.

12:12 AM

Coming into Cate's apartment, Kyin collapsing on the couch.

The bag, her cast on her stomach.

Bending Cate. "Are you ok?" she asks.

"Yes," says Kyin, "I just need to lie down for a second."

Closing her lids.

Saturday, October 3rd

Clear, 55°

7:02 AM

"Huh?"

Kyin up from the couch. "Where—" looking, rotating her head.

"Oh," she says.

Into her bag—checking for her notebook, camera, phone.

Into her pocket—pulling out the stone, black, then putting it back.

Leaning over her knees, rubbing her sockets.

To the kitchen, leaning into the refrigerator.

From the faucet, a glass of water lukewarm—spit out into the sink.

Walking looking into the bedroom—Cate sleeping on her stomach, her hair covering her
face.

Again to the kitchen, the refrigerator—grabbing and pouring orange juice cold.

To the couch—a note crumpled.

Kyin,
It's about 4 AM, so I guess you're not going to wake up.
You fell asleep and I didn't want to wake you, you looked so peaceful.
I hope you're ok. Maybe you were just tired. Or had a little too much to drink (that happens to me sometimes).
If you wake up, please don't go. Just stay and relax, and maybe we can go out to breakfast? You can wake me whenever you like. Or you can watch TV, or whatever.
Unfortunately, my internet doesn't work (sorry).
I'm leaving in 2 weeks for a business trip, so I was hoping we could spend some time together before then.

Cate

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the television.

9:11 AM

Into the bedroom, leaning over Cate heavy breathing.

Again back to the television, the couch.

9:57 AM

Cate stomping from the bedroom into the kitchen.

Turning looking at Kyin. "Hi," she says, she smiles. "I'm—have you been up long?"

Kyin standing stretching. "No," she says. "Not long. Did you sleep enough?"

Smiling Cate yawning walking to Kyin. "Yes—I'm glad you stayed. Do you want to go get breakfast?"

"Sure," says Kyin.

"Ok, good," says Cate. "I need my—some tea. Let me get dressed."

10:29 AM

Coming across Taft Bridge, light jackets bracing crosswinds.

Cate holding onto the cast.

10:44 AM

Eating, sitting.

Kyin with an onion omelet, coffee. Cate with french toast and fruit, tea.

"I forget where you're going," says Kyin.

"Huh?"

"In the note," says Kyin. "You said you were going somewhere for work."

"Oh yeah," says Cate, stabbing a strawberry, "I go down to West—to Virginia every year—in the Fall, for a few weeks. It's this new program my company's trying to get started."

Eating eggs, onions. "What is it—would I understand it?"

"No—I mean," sipping tea, "it's this boring computer stuff, so—and only a few people in the world really even care enough about it."

"Alright," eating hashbrowns, eggs. "But one day you'll have to try and explain some of it to me."

Smiling Cate.

"And one day," says Kyin—pointing her fork, "you'll have to take me down there. I bet the leaves changing are beautiful."

Cate eating smiling lowering her head.

Saturday, October 17th

Sunny, 56°

12:04 PM

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 12:04 PM

Cant a song of swallows swirling, the cyclical structure of time.

Air thick between and under imbricated wings.

Autumn!

I've been up all night into the day watching Trinidad.

Kids are happy to have a day off school—riding bikes, bouncing basketballs.

Cate is down in Sugar Grove—I still haven't decided if I should go down there or not. I suppose I should—what good would it do me? Sitting around, maybe following her to eat lunch. Still, it'd probably be good for me to check in on things down there.

I've also been thinking about visiting my aunt in Korea. Just to check in. I doubt Ian is there, but it would be something.

Nothing new from Jason Green.

Robert Thompson is never home.

The swallows have been looping around and up and down all morning.

Patrick Walker stays put.

This whole network I've set up—what good does it do me?

Blog, 12:23 PM

And I've had a headache for the past five hours. I was in bed for about an hour, but it didn't do any good.

Nothing new on Neighbor 44—Mr. Dixon.

I saw Anisa today. I haven't seen her in a while. She was out playing. I love that kid!

Something about her.

Another shooting today—Kenilworth Courts, 4544 Quarles Street. Planning on going there later today to check it out.

I wish Ian was here, he could make sense of all of this—make it into a nice neat story. MICE and the FBI, they work together. And DHS, US-VISIT. The NSA. Some great big biometric conspiracy. That's how the story would go. Let's see, what else? Let's think about how this story works.

Ok, so why would Cate be going to Sugar Grove? Sugar Grove is a "listening station." All they do there is listen to people. Sit and listen to the world. So—Cate, the biometric cryptologist.

Lonely little Cate, climbing up into the mountains to listen to all the world.

The only biometric connection there is the voice.

So, ok—Stage 1: Cate is setting up a voice recognition system for the NSA. That way, the NSA no longer has to listen to everyone. They can just run the voice recognition computer program, and the computer will alert them when a known "bad guy/girl's voice is on air." Of course, the limitation there is that it doesn't tell them the content of the conversation, just the voice pattern. So if someone who isn't in the voice database is planning something bad, then the computer won't pick it up. Anyway, it's a start. That's Stage 1.

I wish Ian's email still worked, so I could at least send him this story.

Stage 2? Let's see. Neighbor 44—Mr. Dixon works for MICE. He's setting up—what?

DC Police—I don't know where this fits in. They shoot people—why?

Ah, I'm getting stuck. This is a difficult story to tie together. Ok, so DC Police and DHS have cameras all over the city. But they don't have time to actually watch these cameras...so the cameras are mostly deterrents—except for the fact that most of the public doesn't even know they're there (even with the mayor's back-patting conferences). You can't be deterred by something if you don't know it's there, right?

But the cameras are also—ostensibly, if all things work out, if they don't have a fuzzy image—for use after the fact, after a crime has been committed. If they could hook up these cameras to a computer recognition system, the computer could do the looking for them. I'm still not quite sure on how all this plays out. It sounds good in theory, but in practice, the logistics of it, they have a long way to go.

Blog, 1:05 PM

I sit here and watch these cameras, and I'm bored out of my mind. People doing the same things over and over.

What is it—so there is no story? I am not looking for something.

So what then has been guiding me? My gut? Instinct? Some biological imperative?

The need to be like my brother—always looking for connections, for explanations.

Always telling stories. I have a headache, ok? What do I know? I know I don't like Robert Thompson. I know I saw him shoot a kid for no reason, and then the news says that the kid was shooting first—I was fucking right there, and that kid was just standing there in the rain. Maybe that's what it is—I was so angry with Robert Thompson, maybe that's why I'm doing all this. No, that's bullshit too. Ah, it's fucking bullshit, being dragged around by gut feelings instinct.

The look in his eye.

Jason Green had the same fucking look. *What the hell are you doing in Trinidad?*

Patrick Walker. *Why do you fucking act so damn suspicious?*

Thompson—the look he's giving me as he punches my cheek.

You don't know what you're fucking dealing with you motherfucker—you think I'm this little tiny thing that will take your shit. You have no fucking idea. I watch you when you pick your nose and sit on the couch, I see your wife looking at you with disgust when you're out sitting on the porch drinking, because she knows, too.

They all have that look.

I have a headache and it won't go away.

Onto the couch.

Dozing—the cast draped across her eyes.

4:04 PM

Doors opening, right side. Please stand back and allow customers to exit.

The rows of red-orange hexagons.

Down from the platform onto Minnesota Avenue.

The road long and straight.

Under the Metro—through the passage, the tunnel.

Climbing onto Polk—Olive—Quarles—cars passing.

Calm green residential streets lined with lawns and sidewalks.

The a line into Kenilworth Courts.

4:34 PM

A man and another man standing watching Kyin walking.

"Hi," she says, "Can you tell me where the shooting was last night?"

The man on the left holding out his arm.

"Down there," he says, he points, "Why?"

"I'm doing a story on it," says Kyin.

The man on the right nodding. "A little late," he says.

"Kids with guns," says the man on the left.

He points, moving his arm horizontally as he speaks— "They came in, they shot, they drove out."

The two men staring at Kyin.

"They weren't from around here?"

The man on the left shrugging. "Across the river—most likely," he says.

"Kids," she says.

"Yeah," says the man on the right, "Not grown, anyway."

Three women are walking pulling groceries.

The men watch the women walking.

The man on the right nods at the woman in jeans. "That's his cousin," he says.

Kyin turning to look.

"Her?" she asks—pointing.

The man nodding.

Kyin following the women.

"Miss?"

The woman—Kyin's age—in jeans turning stopping.

"Hello—miss," says Kyin. "I'm a reporter—I—I'm sorry for your loss."

The woman standing looking.

"I'm writing a story on your cousin's murder. I wanted to ask you a few questions."

"I don't know anything about it."

Nodding Kyin. "Ok," she says.

"Maybe," she says, "you can just tell me about your cousin—about what was he like?"

The woman looking at her groceries. "I don't know," she says. "We were close when we were kids, but we don't talk."

Nodding Kyin. "Can I ask your name?"

"Malika—Jenkins."

“Ok,” says Kyin, “so, do you don’t—have you lived here your whole life?”

The woman nodding. “Yeah,” she says.

“Gregg, too,” she says. “All us grew up here.”

Now walking toward a building—Kyin asking, “What was it like—growing up here?”

“It’s fine,” says Malika, “Much worse back then,” she says.

Now pulling the groceries, “We didn’t go out at night—someone was shot maybe once a week.”

Stopping to look at Kyin. “It got better. But about a year ago, my friend’s mom was shot in the head—and her little kid—”

The two stopping in front of a building.

“Now,” says Malika, “They’re talking about tearing this all down.”

Malika looking at Kyin.

Nodding Kyin.

The two carrying the metal grocery cart up the steps—Kyin lifting the bottom.

Malika pulls up on the handle. “What paper you with?” she asks.

“My own,” says Kyin.

“Oh,” says Malika.

She stands breathing—then continues pulling.

“It doesn’t matter, anyway,” she says.

“Nice meeting you,” she says.

6:06 PM

Coming into the apartment.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the television.

Lying on the couch looking at the painting.

The bottom-left corner—dark squares one-millimeter across climbing into a circle of light.

Monday, October 19th

Overcast, 52°

5:58 AM

Down to the empty trashcan, looking—“Oh yeah,” says Kyin.

Into the apartment, looking down—*Neighbor44*—Mr. Dixon standing smoking, the dog winding around a trunk.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:04 AM

Female Anchor: More on that shooting yesterday near Capitol Hill—here's Naomi.

Naomi: Tourists here got quite a scare yesterday as a car came speeding down New Jersey Avenue onto Louisiana [cut to Capitol officer standing behind microphones] "I don't know—I'll have more details on that later—all I can tell you right now is that the man—the suspect was—officers attempted a routine traffic stop, the suspect fled, and then, the suspect had a gun, so officers—officers felt a threat and fired upon the suspect." [cut to reporter standing] We now know that that man—identified as Brandon Hines—has been killed. Lydia?

Lydia: That's quite a scare near the Capitol.

Male anchor: Yeah, quite a tragedy. Up next, commentary from our local team debating the President's speech last night.

Into the kitchen.

Making coffee.

An egg from the fridge.

Kyin walking to the television—crushing the egg with her hand.

"Fucking bullshit," she says—setting her jaw.

Clicking off the television.

"Motherfuckers," she says, she seethes—rinsing shells, yolk from her hand.

Dressing—packing the bag.

6:24 AM

Down and up to Connecticut—to Florida, grabbing a cab.

"New Jersey and Louisiana," says Kyin.

6:43 AM

Down wide avenues lined with trees and rectilinear buildings.

Grids of windows.

Looking across at the green lawn, a monument—a tall thin rectangle sounding bells.

Coming upon the intersection—quiet in the early hour.

A dried spot of blood.

She looks, then looks behind herself, turning—cars, cabs passing.

The camera against her eye.

The avenue serene. The sun rising—bright hitting against the windows, the grid.

Shooting the bloodied pavement.

9:04 AM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen, dumping out coffee—making another pot.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Cameras—House—Robert Thompson.*

The house empty.

Clicking open—*Cameras—House—Jason Green.*

Officer Jason Green sitting in a chair, reading the newspaper. Drinking orange juice—looking up at the camera to change the channel.

Closing her lids—pressing her palm against her lid.

Looking again at the screen—“Aissh,” she says.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Dressing—down and up to Connecticut.

9:35 AM

Into an institutional brick building.

A woman behind a desk—“I’m sorry,” says Kyin. “I’m a little late.”

“Your name, miss?”

“Kyin Choi—k-y-i-n-c-h-o-i.”

The woman typing, looking at the screen. “Choi is your last name, miss?”

“Yes.”

Typing.

“Ok, miss—you’re fine, the doctor is running a little behind schedule today. Please go ahead and have a seat, and a nurse will come and get you.”

“Ok, thanks.”

9:55 AM

The nurse wheeling Kyin into a room.

She places a pad over Kyin’s chest, then walks behind a wall.

“Ok,” she says.

Then wheels Kyin down the hall, into a smaller room.

10:10 AM

Sitting biting her cheek.

The doctor comes in looking at X-rays.

“Hi, Ms. Choi, how are you?”

Looking up at Kyin.

“Anxious,” says Kyin.

The doctor nodding. He sits, looking through his clipboard.

Then looks up at Kyin. “Ms. Choi,” he says, “I have some bad news—it looks like your plate held for a while, but it’s starting to come loose. It’ll be fine for a while longer, but I think we should do something before it gets too out of hand.”

Setting her jaw.

“You have a very unusual case—for some reason, your bones—”

“So this means another surgery?”

The doctor nodding looking down. “Yes,” he says, “I’m afraid so—it looks like—yes, we can, if you like, we can get you in pretty soon, either today—”

“I don’t understand this,” says Kyin.

Holding up her arm, “This is just a hand right?”

The doctor nodding looking down. “I know it can be—”

“Why can’t you fucking fix my hand? I mean—it’s just a fucking hand, right?”

The doctor looking up. “Ms.—”

“No—I mean—I must be stupid,” she says, “I need another doctor.”

She stands, turning her back to him—stepping into her pants.

“I’m a fucking idiot,” she says, “Letting you do all this shit, and you’re just a fucking dumb shit.”

The doctor quiet.

Kyin quiet—dressing.

“I know it can be frustrating, Ms. Choi. I want you to know—”

Turning to him, holding up her arm. “It’s just a fucking hand, ok? Fix the fucking hand!

How hard is it? It’s been—it’s fucking been four fucking months already! Fucking fix it! I don’t—I don’t care if you—if it’s a goddamn metal hand, just give me a fucking hand!”

Kyin finishes dressing—sits on the table, breathing.

The doctor leaning back, resting the clipboard on his knee.

“Kyin,” he says, “if you just—ok, if you want, we’ll have you into surgery in a few hours, and we’ll give you a new hand. It’ll be metal and bone and plastic. I was putting off doing something so drastic, because I thought you might—I thought your bones would grow back.

“But you’re right, it looks like they’re not moving.

“So we’ll—we’ll just make you a new hand, ok? And it’ll look just like—like your old hand. I’m sorry this is, I know this must be very frustrating, very difficult for you. But after today you’ll have a new hand, ok?”

The doctor leaning forward.

Quiet Kyin sitting.

The doctor standing. "Ok," he says, "just—ok, I'll set up the surgery, and—just go ahead and change back into your gown, and the nurse will be right in."

4:27 PM

Coming into Dupont, a diner—booths and stools chrome and vinyl.

Ordering a milkshake, french fries.

Sitting against the glass—watching the sidewalk.

Connecticut.

A man asking for change, singing a song.

A woman in a business suit walking with her head down.

A woman fast moving, her white skirt billowing—talking on a cellphone.

Clicking heels and honking horns.

A man swinging his briefcase.

A woman and man jogging, talking.

A man and a boy, the boy pointing at the man asking for change, singing a song.

A man holding out fliers to passing people—smiling and talking.

A woman and woman walking talking smiling.

Friday, October 23rd

Overcast, light drizzle, 50°

7:04 PM

Leaning forward in her chair—"Let me see your hand," says Tisha.

Kyin turning on the couch, holding out her arm.

Opening, closing her hand—making a fist.

"Grab it," says Kyin.

Tisha grabbing the hand—turning to look at Fiela.

"Come here," she says, "Feel this thing."

Fiela standing and walking, touching the hand.

"What an odd feeling," she says—her two hands pressing the hand—"What is that?"

Tisha pressing a knuckle. "How'd they make it look normal?" she asks.

Grinning Kyin. “If they made it look normal,” she says, “does that mean it’s not a work of art?”

Tisha smiling looking up. “No,” she says, “It’s—that’s what makes it a work of art, the fact that it looks normal.”

Fiela walking into the kitchen. “It sure as hell doesn’t feel normal,” she says.

“No,” says Tisha, standing with Kyin—the two entering the kitchen.

Leaning into the refrigerator, Kyin grabbing a beer cold.

“It’s some kind of plastic,” she says, popping the top, “and they—I’m not sure exactly, but—well, the doctor gave me a video of the surgery, and I’ve watched it—you can see it if you want—”

Tisha scrunching her face.

“Nasty,” says Fiela.

“Alright,” says Kyin, “But what they do—did—is—it’s really time-consuming—they sort of molded this plastic, then they somehow inject bone marrow and this kind of liquid metal to toughen it up. So the plastic is what makes it—most of the appearance of it is the plastic, and the—the feel of it is mostly the—”

“Plastic surgery,” says Fiela—pouring wine.

“Literally, yes,” says Kyin, “The term—the jargon—though, *plastic surgery*, I mean—now they have the jargons *cosmetic surgery* and *reconstructive surgery*, so they’ve—I call it jargon refining—” Fiela shaking her head—“Ok,” says Kyin, “I know that stuff bores you—but I’ll just say that now—now they have these new terminologies—I mean—” she holds up her hand—“it’s aesthetic, right? A work of art—but at the same time, it’s just, it looks the same as it did before all this bullshit. So, it’s not—the surgery didn’t add anything, aesthetically—and usually, when they use the jargon *cosmetic surgery*, the implication is that there’s been some sort of aesthetic addition, that the point is to make you look—I dunno—better?”

The three returning to the couch, the chairs.

“But they did add something physically,” says Tisha. “It’s art, ok—but it’s also, it seems like it’s stronger than a normal hand.”

“A lot stronger,” says Fiela.

“Yes,” says Kyin, “it is.”

Slamming her fist on the table.

The three watching the table bounce.

Saturday, October 24th

Clear, 53°

7:13 AM

Printing pictures—Robert Thompson and Sabine: drinking, kissing, laughing, holding, touching, walking, eating, talking, kissing, smiling, caressing, kissing, laughing, driving, holding, touching, smiling, talking, kissing, caressing, whispering, nuzzling, rubbing, biting, licking, grabbing.

Sliding the photographs into a brown envelope.

From the desk, a marker—writing the address.

Mrs. Thompson 2500 Quincy Street NE Washington, DC 20017
--

Dressing, packing her bag.

Down and up to Columbia—to 18th—into the Post Office, mailing the envelope.

Monday, October 26th

Sunny, 48°

5:02 PM

Clicking open—*Cameras—Houses—Robert Thompson.*

Eating drinking watching.

6:04 PM

A woman walking into the screen, carrying a pile of mail. She drops the pile onto the kitchen counter, walking upstairs.

6:25 PM

The woman comes downstairs, changed into sweatpants and a sweatshirt.

Into the kitchen, pouring a glass of wine.

Carrying the mail to the couch, clicking on the television.

Opening the envelopes.

6:38 PM

Robert Thompson enters the house, dropping his keys on the kitchen counter. The woman jumps up from the couch, carrying a brown envelope. She begins yelling at Robert Thompson, waving the envelope. He yells back, grabbing the envelope—looking at the photographs.

Mouthing—*What the fuck?*

The woman yelling, pointing into his chest—then suddenly turning, running through the living room and up the stairway.

Robert Thompson sitting in the kitchen, looking at the photographs. He puts his forehead into his hand—continuing looking through the pictures.

6:52 PM

The woman coming down the stairs—dressed, dragging a suitcase.

Past Robert Thompson, opening the door—the suitcase catching on the doorjamb.

He stands—the woman raising her head, her palm.

Fuck you, motherfucker, she mouths, she points.

Then closes the door.

7:16 PM

Robert Thompson stands to the telephone, placing a call.

Talking—then hanging up, grabbing the keys and photographs and pushing through the door.

7:42 PM

The cab coming up Quincy, stopping at 24th Street.

Leaning handing the driver money.

Then stepping out onto the pavement. Looking behind herself, slow spinning in a circle.

The lights in houses with windows bright.

The flickering of television sets, the street serene.

Into the house—“Hello!” calls Kyin. “Mr. Thompson!”

Listening waiting.

Into the living room, the bookcase—grabbing the camera, sliding it into her bag.

Climbing the stairs—walking looking through the rooms.

“Hello!” she yells.

Waiting.

Back downstairs, bending, tugging out the washer, the dryer. From her bag, a wrench—loosening the line.

Then pushing back the dryer, the washer.

Into the kitchen, pulling from her bag an air freshener—ripping it from the package, plugging it into the wall.

Wednesday, October 28th

Overcast, 44°

7:03 AM

Into the kitchen—from the fridge, an egg.

Clicks on the news.

Rice from the
rice-cooker.
Cracking the egg
into a pan.

Lifting the egg
onto the rice.
Ketchup—
gochujang.

From the fridge,
an energy drink.

Carrying the
plate to the
couch.

News, 7:03 AM

Female Anchor: Firefighters this morning are digging through the wreckage of a home that exploded in Northeast Washington, killing a police officer. Sandra has the story.

Reporter: [standing before the burnt ruins of a house] A terrible tragedy late last night, as a DC Police Officer was killed from his house exploding.

Reporter: [cut to clip of the house in flames—with firefighters spraying] DC Firefighters worked late last night putting out the flames of this house which erupted when DC Police Officer Robert Thompson came home late last night. [cut to reporter] Firefighters are saying that, tragically, this was an accident—apparently there was a gas leak that was somehow ignited. Officer Thompson was found sleeping. [cut to reporter interviewing a woman] “I was just watching television and I heard this loud thunderclap—and then I realized that it wasn’t thunder” [cut to reporter interviewing a different woman] “Yeah, I live right next door and they—neither one of ‘em have been home the past couple days, and I thought maybe I smelled something yesterday when I was out in the yard yesterday. I—I didn’t even know he came home last night.” [cut to reporter] A tragic story. Back to you Wendy.

Female Anchor: Thanks, Sandra. Quite a tragedy. Sadly, house explosions caused by gas leaks are not uncommon occurrences. DC Firefighters are taking this opportunity to go door to door, reminding local residents of how to prepare against and detect gas leaks, and what they should do should they become aware of a leak.

New, 7:07 AM

Male Anchor: Important stuff to know. Up next, we'll here from DC commuters on what they think of District speed cameras—are they a hidden form of commuter tax?

Cracking open the energy drink.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

The knife slices twice—yolk yellow on the plate pale.

7:46 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 7:47 AM

Robert Thompson died. His house exploded from a gas leak ignited.

Nothing on the news about his wife—seems she wasn't home.

Energy runs green and blue.

North Korea, too, is a black box.

There are at least 14 prison camps in North Korea—a gulag.

These are jargonized as “Labor Camps” by the DPRK. Hundreds of thousands of women, men, and children work as slaves. They are fed barely enough to live. Young women are put in groups and forced to work as sex slaves—jargonized as “Pleasure Groups.” (The Japanese called the Korean women they raped “comfort women”—nasty jargons, both.)

I've been dreaming now and then—the past month or so—of killing Kim Jong Il. This last dream—I was sitting in a field, a stream running through it—then suddenly this massive wall of soldiers began marching by, these large square formations, the kind they have in the Arirang Games—and somehow I was now above all of them, looking down on them—and Kim Jong Il was sitting there, down the row from me, holding a gas tank on his lap, a mask over his nose and mouth. And I walked up to him—then bent down and unscrewed the valve. He watching me through his canasta eyeglasses.

I stayed up late the last couple nights, watching Trinidad. Maybe it's the cold weather—the young men don't stay out as late. They now wear coats and jackets.

Feet onto the coffeetable.

Soft sounds of a late autumn morning.

Standing stretching.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Dressing—jeans, jacket, shoes. Packing her bag.

Down and up to Columbia—into *Café Cliché*, ordering a triple flat white.

Across Euclid, into Malcolm X Park.

A homeless man sleeping on a bench.

A group of Latino men standing sitting talking, gathered around a bench.

Coming to Jeanne d’Arc looking over the city, raising her arm—holding a broken-off sword.

Leaning over the railing, looking down.

Then turning, walking back into the trees.

Finding and sitting on a bench—looking over 16th Street. Cars loud climbing up and speeding down the meridian, toward the monument.

9:11 AM

Clicking open chat.

ThunkChat, 9:11 AM

2cyborg: Yeah, I work. My job is pretty boring, though, so this fills the time.

Vatbrain83: Yeah, I read you. About the same for me, except I often work from home. My little kids always running around.

Becomingbeing: Topic?

3monads: That’s what I was wondering. These two have just been chatting. What does your name mean, Becomingbeing? I mean, I can guess, but I wonder if you’d give your own explanation.

Vatbrain83: Begging your pardon, I’m sure. So sorry for “chatting.”

Becomingbeing: Nothing wrong with small talk, if that’s what you mean by “chatting.” Nothing much to explain my name, really. Two ends of a scale:

Becoming-----Being.

At birth, we are the closest we will ever be to Becoming. So, we have our biology at birth, and we’re born into a family, a culture, a specific time-period (epoch). From that moment onward, we are pushed toward Being—a fixed identity. We acquire cultural ways of behaving. We develop patterns, routines. We wake up and do the same thing every morning. We get a job, then a career. As we age, we move more and more toward that fixed identity (Being), further and further away from Becoming. So, we are—all of us—ever and always in the ongoing process of becoming being. Anyways, that’s a short answer. Anyone else want to explain their names?

Vatbrain83: That brings up some really interesting questions, BB. But I’ll hold off on that—my name is pretty self-explanatory, no? Brain in a vat—the whole, “What if I’m really just a brain in a vat and my reality is just an illusion brought about by electrical impulses or a demon?”

ThunkChat, 9:38 AM

Vatbrain83: I really don't think the whole brain-in-a-vat thing is possible, but I do think it's been one of the most influential philosophical questions.

Becomingbeing: I agree it's been influential, but in bad way—erasing the body. It's still a cool name, VB. I think it's a good question, though, 3monads—I was thinking last time I was in here, “I think I know why everyone chose their name, but I wonder if I'm just assuming one thing and they have another reason.” Whenever I'm in a chatroom, I usually ask how or why people choose their names.

3monads: Monad(s)—it's a mathematical way of looking at the world, really. A mathematical approach to life. Everything is made up of something else. Everything fits together, even those things that don't. Even chaos and relativity.

2cyborg: Just like that we went from “chatting” to opening up about ten different arguments. I guess I'll put off any discussion further—my name “cyborg” is really sort of similar to BB's ideas. We are always in a process of becoming.

2cyborg: What differentiates humans from other species is that they are necessarily technological. That is, human culture is transmitted through technology. A chimpanzee may use a rock to smash an acorn, but what they don't do is teach another chimpanzee to use that tool. Humans teach the next generation—then the next generation modifies that rock, making it a hammer—the generation after that makes that hammer an automatic hammer, etc. Technology is cultural memory. When someone says, “We are too dependent upon technology,” or “Technology runs our lives,” they are missing the point. To be human is to be technological.

Vatbrain83: Some interesting ideas being brought up. It seems that you are talking at the same time about the “human” as a group/species, and the “human” as an individual.

Chopping helicopters above—closing her computer, walking to the railing.

The black dots moving through clouds—cutting over the Capitol, turning toward the White House.

10:27 AM

Cutting across to Georgia, a police officer sitting in a cruiser.

Continuing past the vehicle, slow walking on the sidewalk.

11:02 AM

Eating Ethiopian—tangy injera, the cool honey wine.

Looking through the glass, out onto the street.

11:26 AM

Into a convenience store—down the bright aisles.

Buying water, Excedrin—tossing the pills down her throat.

12:05 PM

Grabbing the bus to Monroe, walking up to Quincy.

12:51 PM

Down Quincy to 25th—the pile of charred ruins.

Blackened boards and bricks scattered. Men leaning and lifting, sorting through the wreckage.

She standing shooting pictures.

A woman coming from behind the small hill, walking over to Kyin. Mrs. Thompson.

“Miss?” she says. “Excuse miss, can I help you?”

Kyin lowering the camera. “Hello,” she says—holding out her hand. “My name’s Helen Chang—I’m a reporter. Are you Mrs. Thompson?”

Mrs. Thompson in jeans and boots, pulling off her work gloves—shaking her hand.

“I am,” she says, wiping her forehead, staring at Kyin.

“What exactly is your story about, Ms. Chang?” she asks, she coughs.

“I don’t—first, Mrs. Thompson—let me offer my condolences.”

Mrs. Thompson nodding staring.

“I don’t have a plan for my story,” says Kyin.

“I’m just following—just going where the story takes me,” she says.

Mrs. Thompson frowning, hipping her right wrist.

“Then you should do a story on Robert,” she says. “On this house,” she turns, gesturing toward the wreckage—then turning back, “Or on his job. He loved this house, and he loved his job.”

Kyin returning the camera to her bag. “I’d love to listen to what you have to say,” she says.

“Whenever you have time,” she says.

Mrs. Thompson staring at the road. “Yes—alright,” she says.

Looking up, “Alright,” she says. “Maybe—do you have a card, a way that I can—I’m not sure about my schedule for this week, it’s all—I’m—”

Looking back down at the ruins.

Waiting Kyin quiet.

Then taking a notebook from her bag, writing a number—reaching out, holding the paper torn.

2:00 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

Onto the couch, dozing.

9:05 PM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Cameras—Trinidad.*

Looking over the streets.

Friday, October 30th

8:10 AM

Sunny, 48°

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

The phone vibrating—Kyin answering.

Cell, 8:13 AM

Kyin: Hello?

Kerry: Hello? Is this Helen Chang?

Kyin: Yes—who's calling, please?

Kerry: Ms. Chang, this is Kerry Thompson—I'm the woman from the house fire?

Kyin: Mrs. Thompson, hello. How are you holding up?

Kerry: Hi, I—I just can't sleep, and I was hoping I could meet with you? Maybe sometime today or this evening?

Kyin: Sure, that sounds—I'm free for lunch, would that work?

Kerry: Lunch, yes—alright. How about—what part of the city are you coming from?

Kyin: I'm—how about we meet on the Mall?

Kerry: Where on the Mall?

Kyin: The—ok, the National Gallery—the on the 7th Street side?

Kerry: Alright. And, alright, lunch—noon is alright?

Kyin: Perfect. See you then.

Kerry: Alright. Goodbye.

Kyin: Bye.

11:02 AM

Down, down, down.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

Finding an empty seat.

11:29 AM

Transferring lines.

11:37 AM

Coming up out of the earth onto dusty pebbles.

The long green lawn with patches of dirt brown.

Crowds of backpacks—clicking cameras.

The Monument—the Capitol.

Across to 7th Street, sitting on short steps.

12:03 PM

Kerry Thompson coming toward Kyin standing.

Kerry Thompson looking around, behind herself—“Where should we go—hello,” she says.

Kyin walking to her, holding out her hand. “Hello, Mrs. Thompson,” she says.

“Oh,” says Kerry Thompson, shaking, “It’s Kerry—alright? Should we go eat? Or just walk around?”

“Then call me Helen, please. Why don’t we just walk up to Pennsylvania and find somewhere to sit.”

“Alright.”

They walk.

“I just can’t sleep,” says Kerry. “Last night—no, alright, let’s see—” pushing her hands into her jacket pockets—bringing out a cigarette.

“Do you mind?” she asks.

“No,” says Kyin.

The two pausing as Kerry lights the cigarette, turning her back to the wind.

Then continuing, turning left onto Pennsylvania.

“Yesterday, I started again,” says Kerry, holding out the cigarette—exhaling. “I was fine for—then I just, sitting in bed and he wasn’t there—” stopping to smoke.

“I haven’t slept in—is this fine?” she asks, seeing an Italian restaurant—Kyin nodding.

Kerry tossing the butt.

They enter, following the hostess to their seats.

A quiet corner. A waiter fast walking over, bending with hands clasped.

"I'll have a—a Jameson—rocks," says Kerry.

"A water—no—a gibson," says Kyin.

They wait—the waiter bringing drinks.

They order.

12:32 PM

Kerry leaning forward. "What—who do you work for?" she asks.

"I work for myself," says Kyin.

"Oh," says Kerry, pausing.

"Good," she says. "So—do you sell your stories?"

"No," says Kyin. "I self-publish. Online."

Kerry playing with the tablecloth. "And do you—does that pay enough? Is that your only job?"

"I get by," says Kyin.

Kerry looking at the patterns in the cloth. "Alright," she says.

Looking up at Kyin. "Listen," she says, "I want you to do a story on something for me. Can you do that? I can pay you, alright? No—just let me tell you the story, alright? Monday night—"

Kyin taking out her recorder, "I'd like to record you," she says. "Is that alright?"

Kerry looking at the machine. "Yes, I guess. I need a cigarette—no—alright," she says.

"So—Monday, right? I come home, and there is this brown envelope in the mail. And it says *do not fold*, and there was no return address—and it, I opened it, and there were these pictures of Robert with another woman, doing all these things—a whole pile of pictures. And he came home and I let him have it, got ignorant on him. And—"

The waiter bringing the plates.

"Everything fine?" he asks.

The two nodding.

The waiter leaving .

Kerry continuing, "So that night," she says, "I left. Packed and—fuck you, I said to him. I said that. That was the last time I saw him," she says.

Looking at the plate—a seared fillet on a bed of noodles.

"I'm not even hungry," she says, "I can't eat this," she says.

Then sits back, drinking.

Square ravioli—cutting Kyin, asking, "Did the envelope have a Post Office stamp—saying where it was from?"

Drinking Kerry. "I—oh damn," she says, "Why the hell—I didn't, I guess I didn't look at that."

Shaking her head.

"What about the woman," says Kyin, "Can you describe her?"

Kerry nodding, picking at the fish. "She was tall and dark black—much darker than me, and I think she was African—you know how?—she was smiling in some of the pictures."

She rubs her chin, "Something about her jaw-line," she says, "her teeth—and—" drinking, "the clothes she was wearing—they made her look—European—," shaking her head. "I just have a feeling," she says, "This is just a feeling I got."

Nodding Kyin.

Kerry swallowing, leaning, staring at Kyin. "I want you to find her," she says. "That's why I called you. I was—last night I was in bed and I couldn't sleep, and—this isn't something—" she shakes her head, "if I told any of his friends—his, the other officers, it just wouldn't—" eating, chewing, "Alright? Police officers? No," she says. "And—I didn't know who else."

Drinking leaning staring at Kyin. "Will you do this?" she asks.

"Is there anything else you can remember?"

"No," says Kerry, fingering the cigarettes, "I mean, I can't think of anything right now. I just—he was sitting there looking at those pictures. He was—I can see the back of his head—he was as surprised as I was. So it wasn't her either, right? She couldn'tve taken those pictures."

Kerry looking at the table.

The fork on the table, the knife.

Kyin eating.

"I'm not hungry," says Kerry.

"I can't eat," she says. Drinking, touching cigarettes, the lighter.

Nodding Kyin.

Placing the recorder in her bag.

"If you think of anything, just call me," she says.

Kerry looking, "So you'll do it?" she asks.

Nodding Kyin. "I'll try," she says.

Kerry nodding smiling. "Yes," she says, "That's all I'm asking. I know I'll think of something else—oh, and I'll pay you well, alright? Whatever—"

"We can—don't worry about that," says Kyin. "I'm just working on a story, ok? Got it?"

Pulling her bag strap over her shoulder.

Kerry nodding.

"And—if I find her, we'll work something out, ok?"

Kerry nodding. "Alright," she says.

"Thank you," she says.

Standing Kyin. "Ok," she says. "I'll call you in a few days—whether I've found anything or not."

"Take care," she says.

"Alright," says Kerry, standing, "Thank you."

6:12 PM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Cameras—Trinidad.*

Looking over the streets.

Tuesday, November 3rd

Light rain, 44°

7:30 AM

Clicks on the news.

News, 7:30 AM

Male Anchor: And in Northeast last night, officers found a man murdered, shot twice in the chest.

Female Anchor: That's a tragedy. A new report by researchers who have found that cancer is more likely among those that are obese. Scientists working in Indiana have released an extensive study detailing the relationship between obesity and cancer.

Making
coffee.

From the
refrigerator,
an egg,
kimchi,
ketchup.

News, 7:36 AM

Male Anchor: In international news today, the growing relationship between Burma and North Korea. US officials are growing more and more worried about activities between these two countries, with a report coming from US Intelligence warning that the Burmese government has been collaborating with North Korea, with North Korea secretly shipping weapons to Burma.

Female Anchor: Coming up, a new perspective on growing up adopted. Jessica Monroe talks with adopted children and their parents, as well as with local adoption agencies.

Rice from the
rice cooker.

Cracking an egg
into a pan.

Sliding the egg
onto the rice.

Carrying the
plate, the mug
to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

9:02 AM

Down and up to Columbia.

Across Irving to 14th Street—waiting and stepping onto the 52 Bus.

At Colorado, jumping off and walking into a cafe.

Ordering a triple flat white.

Sitting watching the intersection: Colorado—14th Street—Kennedy.

A woman walking a group of children. A man walking up the sidewalk.

9:43 AM

From her bag, grabbing her phone—placing a call.

Cell, 9:43 AM

Kerry: Hello?

Kyin: Hello, Kerry—this is Helen.

Kerry: Helen, hello! Did—did you find something?

Kyin: No, nothing yet. I'm thinking—I need to know more about your husband. What—were there places he regularly went to—bars, restaurants? What did he do for fun? Was he especially close to any of his coworkers? Did he have a close friend? Things like that.

Kerry: Alright. Let's see. He was close to Marcus—our neighbor here. They would hang out, drinking and talking. They've been doing that for forever. Then—he never really went to bars or anything like that—what he liked to do, actually, was—he'd go down to CVS and buy a paper or a magazine, then he'd go to park and work on a crossword. Sometimes he'd go to Catholic University, sometimes he'd drive somewhere. I used to go with him—but, the way it's been, I'd go off on my own. Let's see. What were the other things?

Cell, 9:47 AM

Kyin: Is there any way you could set me up a meeting with Marcus, let him know who I am?

Kerry: Oh—well, I—

Kyin: You could just let him know I'm doing a story on your husband, something like that.

Kerry: Yes, ok. I think that might work. Just, Helen—no one, I don't think anyone knows about those pictures—that woman—and—

Kyin: Don't worry. I just want to get a feel for your husband's way of life. What about his coworkers, was he close to any of them?

Kerry: He was, I mean, you know, he was close to them, sure. And sometimes we'd go out with them, to a cookout or something. But he was never really—oh, actually—but that was a while ago—Derrick Cole, he and Robert used to be close—but then we moved, and Robert was transferred, so.

Kyin: Derrick Cole, he works for—he's a DC officer?

Kerry: No, Derrick—if he's still there, he works in PG County. Yes—I'm sure he's still there, his family is from that area. Can you do me a favor, Helen?

Kyin: What's that?

Kerry: If you do find this woman, just—could you call me first? Just let me, give me time to talk to her. I want to talk to her first.

Kyin: Sure.

Kerry: I thought maybe she'd be at the funeral, but I knew everyone there. She wasn't there.

Kyin: Ok, I'll call you if I find anything—goodbye.

Kerry: Alright. I'll set up something with Marcus. And I'll give you a call when I do. Thank you.

Standing dropping the phone into her purse.

Down Kennedy, turning right—walking across the green field.

Looking through the trees. The leaves rough orange and umber flecked.

The quiet houses and empty cars.

Into the house—"Hello!" Kyin calls.

Waiting.

Then putting on her gloves and walking through the rooms. Through the kitchen, into the main room—bending down to the television.

Coming from above—the sound of something falling.

Kyin looking up—waiting.

The house quiet.

“Hello!” Kyin calls.

Waiting.

Then leaning and pulling out the camera.

Carrying it into the kitchen—clicking it on.

“Hello!” she calls, standing.

Waiting.

Walking to the stairs—looking up, calling, “Hello!”

Waiting.

Then turning and exiting the house.

6:03 PM

Coming down Florida, turning onto West Virginia.

Children walking wearing jackets.

Over to Montello, finding a convenience store—sitting outside.

7:30 PM

A police cruiser passing—Officer Jason Green driving.

7:58 PM

A group of young men passing, looking over at sitting Kyin.

8:12 PM

Entering the store, walking down the aisles.

The man behind the glass looking up from his magazine.

Buying water and jerky, Excedrin—tossing back the pills.

Sitting outside.

From her jeans pocket, pulling out the stone—carbonado. Looking at it, then closing it in her fist.

Then closing her lids.

The sounds of the street—voices, engines, brakes, doors, barking.

Wednesday, November 4th

Partly cloudy, 48°

8:11 AM

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 8:11 AM
From: Cate
Kyin,
Hi—I've been thinking about you down here. It's very boring and cold. The mountain and the trees are pretty, but I really only see them while I'm driving. Well, I guess I don't have much to say, just that I wish you could be here. I'm a little drunk writing this.

Cate

On the screen is a man waving a flag, smiling.

The caption reads—*Newly Naturalized Citizens Celebrate.*

The phone vibrating, ringing—Kyin answers.

Cell, 8:16 AM

Kyin: Hello?

Kerry: Hi, Helen? This is Kerry.

Kyin: Hi, Kerry. Nothing new yet, sorry.

Kerry: That's ok. I have—I talked to Marcus, and he'd like to meet you, says he's—he'll try to answer any questions you may have.

Kyin: Ok, great. I'm just trying to get a background on Robert, ok? So I won't ask him anything related to the pictures.

Kerry: Good.

Kyin: When can I meet him?

Kerry: Well, he says come by any evening between 6 and 8, or on the weekends around noon would be best.

Kyin: 6 and 8, ok—where does he live?

Kerry: He lives right down the road—I mean—he lives down at 26th and Quincy, the yellow house.

Kyin: Ok, great. I'll give you a call, Kerry. Goodbye.

Kerry: Ok, thank you, bye.

Email Outbox, 8:15 AM
To: Cate

Cate,
I bet it's not that bad, right? I really would like to come down there. I'm sure it's beautiful, especially with all the leaves changing.

Kyin

Clicking open—*Cameras—Trinidad.*
Panning over the quiet streets.

11:02 AM

Clicking open chat.

4Humours, 11:02 AM

Anima: Choi! Good to see you. I missed you!

Energy: Hey, Anima. I missed you, too.

Darger: Hello, Choi.

Energy: What, just you two?

Darger: Alas, yes. A guy was just in here asking about anger management. He seemed pretty calm, though.

Energy: Darger, ever the comedian. Have you found a cause yet?

Darger: Not yet. Any suggestions? What about you—do you have a cause?

Anima: I missed you, Choi. How have you been?

Energy: A cause? Yes. I'll email you. Anima, I'm doing well, thanks. How are you?

Anima: I am doing good. Have you heard anything about your brother?

Energy: Nothing new, no. I don't know what to think about it. I just feel like a jerk half the time, because I'll just stop thinking about him, then I'll think—oh, he's just doing what he always does, he'll pop up one day and things will be the same—because that's what he would always do—he would just show up out of the blue. But I have no idea what to think about it, really. It's a black-box situation. The act of thinking about the box tells us more about the thinker than the object itself. What about I supposed to think about it? I can't stop thinking about my own thinking. He'll be back tomorrow. No, he won't. Who the hell knows?—ah, sorry, going off.

Anima: I was trying to put myself into the feeling of what it would be like, to feel. To not know whether or not he is, to not know where he is, to not know why he is gone, to not know where to begin looking. I was thinking about this the other night, when I was thinking about you, Choi. It is almost like an unsolvable equation, but you do not even, you have to find the equation first before you can even attempt to solve it. But you cannot find it!

Energy: I was thinking about you too, a week or so ago. About your animal spirits. Korea is an odd one. The Korean tigers, that's what they say—it's the national animal. They have folktales about the tiger. Geographically, if you look at a map and you put the North and South together, it's shaped like a bunny. But now, of course, it's cut in half. So the bottom half—who knows what that is. A torso. An undetached rabbit-part. But the top—it's a duck-rabbit; from one perspective, a duck with a bill; from another, a rabbit head with long ears. Is North Korea a rabbit or a duck? Always shifting from one to the next—but that shifting depends as much upon us, upon what we ascribe to it.

4Humours, 11:04 AM

Anima: I never thought about animal spirits and countries. But now that you say it, it fits perfectly. Each country has its own geography, its own cultural history. Its own ecology—its own environment, animals, weather-patterns, layout of cities and countryside, its own street and road systems and public transportation methods. Niche construction. All of these things shape how a person becomes who they are. My country's animal is the lion. The lion is often paired with the sun. That, too, is ecology.

Darger: Bald eagle.

Energy: Any comment on that, Darger?

Darger: It's bald, but it's not really bald. Whoaaaaaaa.

Energy: Ok—you made me smile. Can I ask—what's the lion, what country is that, Anima?

Anima: Persia. Iran. (wait for reaction).

Darger: Iran, whoa! So do you hate the big bad bald eagle?

Energy: Ass.

Anima: No, I do not know how someone can hate an entire country. I do not know anyone here who hates an entire country, except for old men. Most of what you see in speeches and on the television I am sure it is a performance, an act by a man seeking power.

Energy: Anima, I wanted to ask you, do you jog at school? Maybe for a track team?

Anima: My school does not have anything like that. But I would not do that anyway. I would be too self-conscious.

Enter MindGames

Anima: Welcome, MindGames.

MindGames: Hi.

Energy: Make sure to contact me, ok Anima? I'm gonna go now.

Anima: Ok, goodbye. I will be thinking about you.

Darger: Email me.

6:12 PM

Coming up Quincy to 26th Street—a yellow house.

Knocking Kyin.

Waiting.

A man's voice calling— "Who is it?"

"This is Helen Chang?"

Waiting.

A man coming opening the door, asking, "Who?"

"Hi—I'm Helen Chang? Kerry Thompson said she contacted you about me?"

The man looking down and up at Kyin.

"Come on in," he says, pushing open the door.

Then turning walking into the room.

Coming into a room dark with red wallpaper floral.

Couches—table lamps lit.

"Have a seat," he says, holding his arm above a couch.

Sitting Kyin.

The man sitting in a chair green and brown.

"She said," he says, "you might have a few questions."

The man drinking beer from a bottle.

From her bag, Kyin grabbing her recorder, her notebook. "Do you mind if I record you?" she asks.

"Yes," he says. "I do."

Kyin placing the recorder in the bag.

"I don't have any specific questions, Mr.—is it Marcus?"

The nodding man.

"I'm just trying to find out about Mr. Thompson, anything about him."

"For a story."

Nodding Kyin. "Yes."

The man drinking beer from a bottle, holding it with both hands. Looking at Kyin's knees.

"We just were neighbors," he says. "We drank and talked. That's about it."

Silent Kyin.

The man drinking.

"I heard that explosion," he says. "I was thinking about it, and now I realized that I heard it."

Silent Kyin.

The man leaning forward, the bottle in his right hand. "I bet he was sleeping right through it, right? Found him on the couch, they said."

The man leaning back.

"Which means he didn't have time to get up, to move. Just died in his sleep."

Nodding Kyin.

The man standing walking to the kitchen.

Returning with a bottle full—twisting off the cap.

Sitting drinking.

“What she doesn’t know,” he says, pointing the bottle, “was he had one on the side.”

Bringing her right leg over her left.

The man watching her knees.

Leaning forward, “You can’t write that, though,” he says.

Nodding Kyin.

The man sitting back.

“He was tired, though,” he says, “of being one of them. Every time we got to talkin, he’d say something about leaving it. Doing something else.”

The man drinking.

The man shaking his head.

“You can’t do something else in life,” he says.

Looking at Kyin, her knees, her calves.

“So he would talk about this other woman. And about quitting cop life and whatnot. But it was just—you know. Talk.”

Marcus leaning forward.

“Don’t you have any questions?” he asks.

Kyin pressing the pencil against the notebook, asking, “Did he tell you anything about the woman?”

Marcus leaning back—rubbing his eyebrow.

“She was African,” he says, “Just that. Liked an African woman better than a Black woman. Said she smelled better. Said she was class. That was his thing, that kind of woman. Class.”

The man drinking.

“This past Spring,” says Kyin, “He was involved in a shooting. Do you know anything about that?”

The man shaking his head. “No,” he says, “I don’t know anything about that.”

Looking at Kyin.

Nodding Kyin.

“A young boy,” she says.

The man looking at her eyes.

Then down at her knees, her calves.

"I don't know anything about that," he says.

Silent Kyin.

The man shifting his hips. "He never talked about that," he says. "About those youngn."

Placing the bottle on the table to his right.

"They keep getting younger,' he said," he says, "That's all he would say. 'They keep getting younger, Marcus, I swear.' That's what he'd say. Like he forgot what it was like."

Looking at Kyin.

"You're saying a young boy," he says, "well that's who these boys are, right? You don't see any old men out there doing drive-bys, do you?"

"You see any old men on the corner?"

"You see a killing, you know it's a young man did it. Old men don't go around shooting up streets."

Shaking his head drinking.

Then pulling his finger along his eyebrow.

"I didn't want to think about it," he says.

"But that house was just—there's nothing there. Thinking about—what happened to his body."

The man standing, walking to the kitchen; returning with a bottle full—twisting off the cap.

Coming close over to Kyin.

"Is that it?" he asks.

Looking down.

She leaning, grabbing the notebook, sliding it into her bag.

Then standing, "Yes" says Kyin—holding out her hand, "Thank you for your time."

The man turning from her—sitting drinking.

10:04 PM

Home.

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Looking over the streets.

Thursday, November 5th

Clear, 40°

5:56 AM

Climbing up from the couch to the window.

Looking down at the trashcan—waiting.

6:07 AM

Neighbor 44—Mr. Dixon coming out holding a leash, his dog.

The dog wrapping around the trunk of a tree—squatting.

Mr. Dixon lighting a cigarette. Blue grey smoke coming from his nose, his mouth—subtle doublets undoing.

6:15 AM

Clicks on the news.

Commentary Show, 6:15 AM

Female Anchor:

Horse flu deaths are growing, with over 5500 in the US.

Male Anchor: News also coming today of a shooting in the Northeast neighborhood of Carver Langston. District Police received a call around 2 AM, and arrived at the 1900 block of I Street to find a man shot and dead. The victim, Darnell Jones, could not be revived. This death brings the total DC murder count to 124, well below last year's count of 183. Coming up, a special on voting in NoVA.

Into the kitchen, making coffee.

From the refrigerator—an egg, gochujang.

Cracking an egg into the pan. From the rice cooker—rice.

Sliding the egg onto the rice—a spoonful of gochujang.

Carrying the plate and mug to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

7:12 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 7:13 AM

1900 I Street NE—another shooting. Check it out later today.

Trinidad is the same now. I guess the Autumn weather changes things. Around 7 or so, the streets slow down—less cars, less foot traffic.

It's a little colder.

Between 7 and 10, police cars move down Montello and up Trinidad. Sometimes I can see into them—Officer Jason Green sitting driving.

Three young men move up Montello at some point, usually turning into Holbrook.

Blog, 7:38 AM

Jargons, jargons, jargons.

Neighborhoods, like nations, are jargons. The “United States”—that’s a jargon. An outline drawn on a map. A map is a jargon. With North and South Korea, this arbitrary line has caused millions (?) of deaths.

A person is a “citizen” (jargon) of one country because they live ten feet across an arbitrary line. So they must remain loyal to that country—swear an oath of citizenship! Now put your blood into a database.

“Trinidad”—a neighborhood jargon. Bounded on one side by a cemetery, on another by a university. Between the deaf and the dead.

“Anacostia”—a powerful jargon. All neighborhoods across the river are jumbled together and tossed into a bin labeled “Anacostia.”

“There was a shooting in Anacostia.” That’s like saying “There was a shooting in South Side.”

Like that—an entire area is jargonized, labeled as a homogenous place where shootings are constantly occurring on every single street.

Jargons.

“Murder”, “conspiracy”.

Legal jargons for one individual killing another individual—these jargons are based upon reading the mind of the individual (*mens rea*). The action is supposed to refer back to what is in the mind (the act solves the black box).

We have degrees of murder—sub-jargons.

Manslaughter (such an odd sounding jargon—imagine a cow hanging upside down in a warehouse, the butcher slitting the throat, blood pouring out)—the court jargonizes the mind as not functioning at 100%.

The person was crazy or they killed another by accident or they were not paying attention (jargonized as “negligence”) or they were “under the influence,” or they were too young.

Justifiable Homicide—“crime of passion” (passion, of course, is a jargon—“crime of emotion”?), or *deadly force*

Deadly Force—perhaps the most powerful jargon related to the killing of one human being by another. Here reads part of the US law:

“Such force may not be used unless necessary to prevent the escape and the officer has probable cause to believe that the suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or others.”

The key word, of course, being “and”—rather than “or.” Robert Thompson and Jason Green and Patrick Walker—they each forgot about the “and.”

Robert Thompson—yelling, “Fuck!” then running up to Deandre and reaching into his pocket. Then cursing again.

Jargons.

Blog, 8:03 AM

“Conspiracy”—a tainted jargon. In almost any situation, using this word points back to the user, making them look like a crazy person, a zealot. So, now we see a new word, a new jargon—“coverup.” But that word is not as strong, as righteous sounding—just because you coverup something, that does not imply that that thing is “wrong” or “illegal”; moreso it implies that what you are covering up may just be “not socially acceptable.”

Of course, social acceptability is only a step away from cultural morality and legality—what is “socially unacceptable” in one place is “immoral” or “illegal” somewhere else.

Definition (the act of defining is a type of jargon refining) of “conspiracy”: “conspire,” from the Latin “conspirare,” “literally, to ‘breath together,’ whence, ‘to accord, to harmonize, agree, combine or unite in purpose, plot mischief together secretly,” “To combine privily for an evil or unlawful purpose; to agree together to do something criminal, illegal, or reprehensible (especially to commit treason or murder, excite sedition, etc); to plot.”

The key words here are “evil...unlawful...criminal, illegal, or reprehensible.”

A group of people planning something in secret are not conspiring; it is only a conspiracy when what that group is planning is “evil...unlawful...criminal, illegal, or reprehensible.” Three of those five words have to do with legality, the other two with morality.

So, a “government conspiracy,” for example, is not quite an oxymoron; the government *can* do something illegal; of course, the government can also define its actions as legal *ex post facto*.

Carrying the computer to the desk.
From the kitchen, a glass of water cold. Clicking open email.

Email Inbox, 8:11 AM

From: Cate

Kyin,

It’s really just—driving over the mountain, it’s like I’m entering another world. Those leaves are beautiful—it’s very disorienting. I will drive and drive and drive, surrounded by trees, climbing and climbing, without seeing another car, another living being. Then back down the mountain, winding my way to the job site. I wish I could tell you about it—I think you might’ve guessed by now, it’s a very secretive job. I’m telling you this Kyin, because—because the people I work for, I’ve signed a waiver allowing them to look through my email. There is very specific protocol for everything. So now, because we have been emailing each other (a certain number of times), and because of my position, I am required to tell you that I have signed a waiver allowing my email to be monitored.

Blog, 8:29 AM

One can imagine the Government effectively declaring: “It was illegal? Fine, then we’ll make it legal.” That is how, after the fact, the government is able to avoid the 3 *legal* words in “conspiracy.” The legality, of course, is also political. One political party thinks something should be legal, the other political party thinks that it should not. Political Party X says, “Political Party Z is guilty of a conspiracy/coverup!” Whether they are talking about a *legal* conspiracy or a *moral* conspiracy is not always clear. Morality and politics—hand and glove. What they are really saying is: A) “Political Party Z has different ethics than us,” and B) “It suits us politically to question Political Party X’s morality.” There are still left those two other words—“evil,” and “reprehensible.” To say that the government is involved in a conspiracy is not necessarily to say that what the government did or is doing was or is illegal.

One does not have to refer to the legality of the act; one can just as well refer to the morality—an act that is “evil” or “reprehensible.” Both words, of course, are each extremely subjective, culturally-specific, and political.

What is “evil,” for example, to a Protestant or Catholic (the two religions upon which the United States was founded) may be quite ethical to someone who does not subscribe to any particular religion.

Most all Koreans would say that 518 was both “evil” and “reprehensible.” In fact, it was later ruled as illegal—former President Chun Doo Hwan and his successor were both prosecuted (but *only after another political party came into office*). For pacifists, all war is evil—so any war, if it is planned in secret, is a conspiracy. For murder, it would seem easy to make a case for conspiracy.

For most people, murder is always both illegal and immoral. However, police officers kill civilians every day. Is it “conspiracy/coverup”? *deadly force*. Can something be a conspiracy after the fact? A conspiracy to coverup.

Email Inbox, 8:29 AM

And also my phone calls. The thing is, I hope you don’t get mad about this, I wasn’t allowed to tell you earlier, but now I am required to. So when you email me or we talk on the phone, our conversation is likely being monitored. I’ve tried to not make friends sometimes because of this, because—but I hope, I want to still be your friend.

Maybe this all sounds odd, but I want make it clear that I am not exaggerating and that this is a real thing, my job—a US government job, ok? They monitor my emails and phone calls and, actually, almost everything I do.

I’ve lost some friends because of this.

I hope you and I can remain close. It’s easier for me to tell you this in an email. I think I could only tell you in person if I got drunk (I’m drunk now).

Cate

Blog, 9:07 AM

In a way, I think asking such a question forces one to become tied upon the jargon. So here we have the meeting point of these two powerful jargons, “murder,” and “conspiracy”—with these jargons, we are left with two options—either an event is a “conspiracy,” or it is not. Either it is “murder” or it is not. The jargons allow for no middle ground. This is how jargons restrict thought.

We are again trying to read the mind of the person(s) involved, trying to solve the puzzle of the black box. Reading their ideas by looking at their actions. *Deadly force* has to do with training. Police officers are trained, yet never trained well enough. Training is a kind of embodied theoretical enterprise. It deals with the ideas of what might happen on the job. In most cases of *deadly force*, there is no thinking involved. A situation arises—and the officer reacts—*without thinking*. It is a gut reaction—instinct—training—perhaps even what Anisa would call “animal/cultural spirits.” The officer is not sitting there thinking, “Oh, should I shoot or not? Let me think about this logically and go through all of my legal options.”

DC Police have a policy of “covering up” all acts of deadly force. They themselves investigate themselves. It is only by carefully reading the back pages of the newspaper or going to crime scenes that I’ve been able to find out these officers’ names. An officer shoots a citizen and we don’t even know the officer’s name? Does that make sense? Then, a few months later (sometimes less) the officer is put back on duty.

After killing another human being.

No news—nothing: “Cleared by an internal investigation.” An “internal investigation” is by definition a “secret meeting.” It is a particular culture (Police culture) setting up its own system of morality.

Those outside of that culture are not always likely to agree with those moral tenets.

The main problem, however, with police shootings, is off-duty officers. This is an issue that I will fully address later.

I was photographing the ruins when Kerry Thompson came up and asked me to find Sabine.

Kerry Thompson:

5’5”

African-American

Glasses

Brown Hair

Smokes

Blog, 9:49 AM

I was trying to get a feel for what she is planning on doing when she meets Sabine—talking to her? Killing her? But Kerry is difficult to read.

It is not a nervous energy, nothing like that. More like she does not want to allow her mind to think. She wants to occupy herself with talking and looking about, with making gestures, with smoking. There were moments where she would pause and look at the tablecloth—her face darkening—but she would quickly recover, moving on to the next thing.

10:13 AM

Down and up to Connecticut.

Down to Florida, grabbing a cab.

“Florida—near Maryland,” says Kyin.

10:29 AM

Climbing up Maryland, cutting through a parking lot—entering a Safeway.

Through the bright aisles—lotions, batteries, detergents, greeting cards, aspirins, eye drops, diapers.

Buying gum and water and jerky.

Out and down I Street—rows of brick buildings, cars parked along sidewalks. Walking behind the buildings—chain-link lawns, parked cars, trash cans, chairs.

Midmorning calm.

A dog on its stomach, chin on its paws—raising its eyes to Kyin.

Down 19th Street, a few cars coming up the hill. Turning left at H Street, then left again—an alley behind the houses.

Cars facing stoops and awnings. Hedges and telephone wires—antennas perched on chimneys.

A woman looking out through her second-story window.

Standing Kyin, looking up at the woman moving away—then coming through the door, standing on the metal stairs.

The woman looking down, her hands on the metal railing.

“You lost?” she asks.

Kyin raising her palm flat, shielding the sun.

"I—yes," she says, "I'm looking for the shooting from last night. Do you know which building it was in?"

The woman shaking her head. "No," she says.

"Last night?" she asks.

"Sometime last night," says Kyin. "The police came and found a body around 2 in the morning."

A man walking down the sidewalk. Kyin turning to watch his slow moving form.

"No, I didn't hear it," says the woman—her voice rough.

"Are you a reporter?" she asks.

Kyin again looking up—the palm against her head, her hair.

"Yes," she says.

The woman nodding smoking pointing. "You can just go on down to Benning," she says.

"Ask them at the gas station."

Nodding Kyin. "Can I ask you a few questions—I mean, I'm doing a story on this neighborhood."

The woman exhaling—resting her wrists on the railing.

"A story?" she asks.

Nodding Kyin. "It's—" she says, lowering her palm, "I'm just trying to get a feel for the area—for why someone gets shot here."

The woman smoking—then shaking her head.

Looking down at Kyin.

"Do you like living here?" asks Kyin. "What would—what if someone wanted to move here, what would you tell them about the area?"

The woman exhaling leaning over the railing. Again shaking her head—looking out over the buildings.

"Why don't you come up here," she says—tossing a cigarette. "And I'll show you—show you about this place."

Looking down at Kyin looking up.

Climbing the metal stairway.

The woman holding the door leading into a hallway.

The two standing.

The woman nodding.

"This," she says, she points, "is the hallway."

A pile of trash in the corner.

"When I first moved here," she says, "I used to clean that up."

Looking at Kyin.

"Now I just leave it. There's too much of it—no sense."

They walk down the hallway.

Down the stairs—a plastic bag, a soda bottle.

"In a couple hours," says the woman, "boys will be sitting here—smoking."

"They take over the stairs—crowd them."

Down again, through another hallway—an empty brown fast-food bag, a small plastic bag, a soda can.

The woman pointing to the floor. "Usually, you'll see mice here—I used to have mice in my apartment, but I've got a good eye on them now."

Down another hall, pointing.

"Two years ago they found a boy here dead—didn't know him—he was from across Maryland, over in Carver—*Little Vietnam*."

"Where?" asks Kyin.

Shrugging Lynn. "Over there," she says, she waves.

Down the hallway to mailboxes metal.

"This the main office—this is where you call if you don't want anything to get done."

The woman walking to the door, turning to smile at Kyin.

"When I first moved in, I used to call and complain about the trash—about them turning off the water for no reason—about the boys sitting here blocking the stairs—about them not mowing the lawn—about all that stuff."

"I finally realized calling them does no good."

They continue, walking outside.

"It's the same with the police, right?" says the woman.

"Used to call when I heard gunshots, when I saw them dealing—but they would never come anyway, so—right?"

"They only come to pick up the bodies."

Between buildings walking, the crumbling asphalt. The woman zipping her jacket coughing.

Grabbing a cigarette—lighting.

The woman waving her hand. "Past nine or ten, this is where they stand and deal," she says, she points—empty bags on the ground. "They don't even pick up their damned—paraphernalia."

Leaning down to pick up a bag—showing it to Kyin—then tossing it aside.

Smoke streaming from her nostrils.

Down a sidewalk, coming to a playground. Children playing—swinging, sitting, climbing.

Women sitting watching, talking.

The woman nods to the other women.

They nod at the woman, at Kyin.

The first woman then sitting nodding at Kyin. "She's a reporter," she says—breathing smoke, "She wants to know about the shooting last night."

The women looking at Kyin.

"What about it?" says one woman—wearing black pants—hands resting on her thighs.

Nodding Kyin. "My name's Helen Chang," she says, she sits. "Can I ask your names?"

"Lynn," says the first woman.

"Diana."

"Tasha."

Grabbing from her bag the recorder—Kyin asking, "Is it alright if I record you?"

The three looking at the machine.

Lynn nodding—flicking away the cigarette.

"Sure," says Diana.

"What for?" asks Tasha.

"It's just easier than writing things down," says Kyin.

Slow shrugging Tasha—looking down.

Kyin pressing the button.

"I wanna know about the shooting last night, if any of you know about it. But, really, I want to know what it's like to live here."

Coughing Kyin covering her mouth.

Tasha saying, "I don't know anything about it."

"He was young. I know that," says Diana.

Nodding Kyin. "Have you lived here long?" she asks.

"About five years," says Diana.

"Two years," says Tasha.

"Forever," says Lynn.

"What's it like here?—it seems pretty quiet now."

"Yeah," says Diana, "It'll stay quiet for a couple more hours. Then the schoolkids will come home and run around—some of them stay out until 10 at night—later. Bad parents letting their kids run around with what's going on."

Lynn crossing her arms—looking down.

"What's going on?" asks Kyin.

"It's not that bad," says Tasha. "Don't make it like that."

"The hell," says Lynn—looking up. "If you don't see 'em, you hear 'em."

Diana leaning forward. "What's going on," she says, "Is gunshots from who knows were—crews walking like they own the place. If you want to know what it's like to live here, that's what it's like."

"They do own the place," says Lynn, "they don't need to act."

"It's not like that," says Tasha.

"I wouldn't let my kids out that late," says Diana, turning to look over at the children on the slides. "You have to be some kind of mother to let your little kids run around with all that going on."

Tasha standing yelling, "Eric, quit that!"

A little boy stopping punching another little boy. The second boy yanking his arm away—walking over to the swings. The first boy sitting down crossing his arms staring at Tasha.

"Yeah," says sitting Tasha, "go ahead and sit there for a while."

The women looking at the sitting boy, then back at each other, at Kyin.

Sitting quiet.

"So," says Kyin, "I mean—the police, they just let drug dealers walk around?—they just sort of do what they want?"

Nodding Lynn.

Tasha crossing her arms.

"The police, they drive by," says Diana. "Maybe once every or night or so. They drive. Or—" she looks at Lynn, "when was that—couple months ago?"

Nodding Lynn. "It's because," she says, "just wait til summer—that's when it's bad. You hear shots all night. It's different now, though—with the cold."

“What happens,” she says, leaning, “is that they step up patrols for a week or so when there’s too much shootings bunched together. So—there’s another shooting this week, then you’ll see some more of them around here for a while.

“Driving—looking around.

“And then, when nobody dies—they clear out.”

Tasha walking over to the boy—bending down to him, talking.

Diana looking at Kyin—nodding toward Tasha. “She’s just young,” she says.

Nodding Lynn.

3:34 PM

Coming up Columbia, into a park—finding a bench, sitting.

A Latina women pushing White children on swings.

Dogs running down the grassy hill.

4:15 PM

Coming into the apartment. Into the kitchen for water cold.

Hanging up her jacket, unpacking her bag.

Carrying the computer to the couch—clicking open her blog.

Blog, 4:18 PM

Jargonizing is translating another person’s way of putting things—most especially in regard to their own lives. It is saying, “I can explain your life better than you can explain your life.” A sociologist/ethnographer goes into a community and lives there for a few years, interviewing “subjects” and “observing” their ways of life. Then the sociologist goes home and writes about those people’s lives, summarizing them in a nice and tidy fashion: jargonizing.

Reporting, of course, is jargonizing. A reporter gathers together bits and pieces, quotes and figures, studies (“A recent study found that...”)—then puts those pieces together into a coherent narrative, always linear, always organized, always logical, always with a beginning and end—jargonizing. A news story always begins with the first two paragraphs drawing the reader in—a narrative technique (journalism has its own bevy of jargons: “lead”, “teaser”, “dateline”, “graf”, etc). The next few paragraphs provide some meat—a few statistics, a few quotes. There is always and ever a cut-and-paste outline to these stories, a way of shaping the events described. Jargonizing.

I go into an area and I have no idea what I’m doing there. Looking for a murder. I always follow my gut—I purposely never have a plan. Even so, over time I absorb my previous unplanned experiences, my previous interactions. My experiences in Barry Farm, in Park Morton, in Trinidad— so too, my daily life in Adams Morgan, in Columbia Heights, is in there somewhere rolling around—these experiences, whether I like it or not, shape my expectations walking through Langston.

Blog, 4:25 AM

Gut feelings are vague accumulations of past experiences.

“New Communities Initiative” is a jargon that follows in the tradition of HOPE VI and other HUD ventures (acronyms are a type of jargonization that is especially popular in the government). It is difficult not to see the progression as: “Let’s move the tenements!” (City Beautiful) to “Let’s build housing projects!” (Great Society) to “Let’s tear those projects down, they’re hotbeds for crime! Now let’s build ‘*mixed communities!*’” (New Communities/HOPE VI).

The rows of institutional brick buildings.

Replaced by rows of institutional townhomes.

“Projects”—wow, what a powerful jargon!

I have no idea what to think about any of this. My vague gut feeling tells me that it is a bandaid, something to push poor people out to the suburbs.

PG County.

If they could, I’m sure the DC Government would move the “New Communities” directly into PG County.

But these are just gut feelings, nothing more. Unsubstantiated. Unfortunately, when I look back on my interviews, I can see how these guts feelings are probably shaping my way of thinking, my way of seeing this whole situation.

I went down today to Langston, looking for a shooting that I never found. Walking, I ended up talking to a group of women. One of the women I spoke to today, Lynn, when I asked her questions, she would look at me with patience. Another one of the women, Tasha, who was much younger than the other two women—closer to my age—she never stopped looking at me with hate. Maybe it wasn’t hate—but it felt like hate. Such a powerful way of looking at someone!—a look that can transmit such a powerful feeling. The two older women (both in their early 40s, I would guess) seem fed up with the crime in their area, yet sort of used to it, shrugging their shoulders. One second they were angry about it, then next they were acknowledging that nothing could be done but to make the best of the situation. Tasha denied the crime—downplayed it.

When I first moved into the city, the first thing I noticed was how cold people were. People up and down Connecticut, refusing to acknowledge a smile, a wave, a “Hello.” People in Dupont and Georgetown, even in Adams Morgan, not looking at you as you passed them on the sidewalk. This is especially the case on the Metro. One thing that continues to surprise me is that—is, when I go into a part of the city that has a poorer population, almost always, without fail as of yet, the people there are more friendly, willing to talk to me, to say hello, even if I’m just passing them on the sidewalk.

Especially people over 40. Actually, it’s been the same when I went out to the rural States—West Virginia, Pennsylvania.

Blog, 4:39 PM

Lynn is a good example. I first saw her just looking out through her window, just sort of curiously sizing me up (I was walking through a back alley behind the buildings—it's likely that the only people usually seen in that alleyway are residents)—then she came out and asked me if I was lost. She eyed me skeptically, but still, she offered me her help.

I can't imagine that ever happening on Connecticut. If, say, I went down a back alley, and someone saw me from their window—if they saw me looking at them, I would expect them to move away from the window, probably closing the blinds. In fact, that happens all the time in my own apartment building—I run into someone in the hallway, and they refuse to even look at me. We live in the same building!

Lynn took me around, introducing me to the other women. There were the occasional off-kilter looks (especially from Tasha), but they—we just sat there and talked.

But, generalized, it sounds like some mawkish painterly view of life: "Poor people, yes, they're nice! Rich people are mean!" I'd rather hypothesize: poor people have less of a sense of privacy; they are more open to public intrusions. This is especially true in the city. It's very difficult to describe this—I'll call it a vibe.

The gut feeling I get as compared to walking down Connecticut and walking where I walked today. There's also, of course, the vibe I got the first time I walked up Montello late at night (dangerous vibe).

The vibe walking on the National Mall (tourist vibe).

The vibe walking on Pennsylvania Avenue and near Chinatown (suits-and-skirts vibe).

The vibe in Dupont (yuppie vibe). These places have an atmosphere that seeps through our skin, into our gut. We smell, hear, see—our sense of space informs us, telling us something. But a vibe—a gut feeling—cannot be verbally communicated. I cannot write down here my gut feeling.

For some people, the fact that gut feelings cannot be verbalized makes them invalid.

"Logic/reason over emotions/feelings!" they say. This is primarily a Western attitude—the idea that Reason can be separated from Emotion. (When, in fact, "Reason" and "Emotion" are just two made-up jargons)

Gut feelings guide us, shape our being, how we think, the choices we make, who we are—yet we cannot verbally transmit those feelings to others.

One street feels safe—the next street over feels dangerous. In Adams Morgan, the side streets off 18th Street and Champlain Street are the two most dangerous areas.

Clicking open chat.

<p>Blog, 5:54 PM</p> <p>College-age kids come on Fridays and Saturday nights to drink on 18th Street—then, walking home, drunk, they are easy victims. Statistics back up these gut feelings (the gut feelings do not come from reading statistics—they come from experience). Adams Morgan/Columbia Heights by far has the highest rate of non-murder crimes (assault, burglary, theft) in all of DC. These crimes almost always occur between strangers.</p> <p>East of the Anacostia River (Anacostia, Congress Heights, Kenilworth, Quarles) by far has the highest rate of murder. These crimes almost always occur between either people that know each other (husbands, friends) or members of rival gangs. Note—“Gang” is a powerful jargon, one that I will hold off on discussing (being replaced by “crew”).</p>	<p>ThunkChat, 5:55 PM</p> <p>Swampman: Yes, that’s exactly what I’m talking about—unintentional versus intentional action. (And I’m not using the word “intentional” in a phenomenological sense.)</p> <p>Vatbrain83: I’m still not sure I follow you. For one thing, I know little to nothing about phenomenology—what I do know is from this chatroom.</p> <p>Beingbecoming: We have the jargons: “involuntary,” “absent-minded,” “willful,” “deliberate.”</p> <p>Swampman: Involuntary, yes, that’s the word I was looking for. Thanks, BB! Good to have you here as back up.</p> <p>Beingbecoming: It’s interesting, we have two parallel phrases: “Involuntary blinking,” and “involuntary manslaughter”—(in the US, that is)—</p>
<p>Beingbecoming: I doubt anyone, though, would claim that in both cases it is the same kind of “involuntary” functioning taking place. “Her heart was beating involuntarily.” “She killed him involuntarily.”</p> <p>Vatbrain83: Oh no, here comes BB to muddy things up! Ha! But I think I get what you’re getting at a little better now.</p> <p>Swampman: Most would extend “involuntary actions” beyond those few muscular movements. Start with blinking: we CAN (ability, choice) control our blinking, but usually we don’t. Our blinking controls itself. And yet it is still us!—still OUR body doing the controlling. Again, we are implicitly saying that MIND=CONTROL, and BODY=LACK OF CONTROL. Not being able to control getting sick. Coughing. Waking up. Blinking works the other way around—exerting control STOPS an action, halting it, rather than initiating it.</p> <p>Beingbecoming: I really like that example, Swampy. Controlling action is as much about inaction. “Control yourself!” Deciding NOT to do something. This makes me think of a number of ethical questions. Deciding NOT to help someone after they’ve been hit by a car. Deciding NOT to report someone for a crime you witnessed them commit.</p>	

ThunkChat, 6:22 PM

Vatbrain83: Oh, BB. Slow down! Now you're talking about ethics and whatnot—where'd that come from? We're talking about consciousness and action!

Swampman: What I'm saying is that if we decide to look at the connection between "consciousness and action," then we are deciding to talk about actions that are planned, actions that are thought of beforehand. It is to position all action as future-oriented. So what about those involuntary/unintentional actions? What about actions that aren't future-oriented, that aren't planned? Where do they fit in?

Beingbecoming: I think we're on the same page, Swampy. But what about inaction? The decision to not act? Maybe I am making a leap to ethics, but we live in a world, we live with other people—most of our action/inaction is within that world, surrounded by others, within an environment. Most (if not all) of our action affects and is affected by others. Most (if not all) of our action affects and is affected by our environment. I think also what we're talking about here is the powerful jargon "THE WILL." And anytime we talk about "THE WILL," we are talking about both "ETHICS" and "FREEDOM" ("free will"—"choice"—ethics).

2cyborg: Ha—VB, when are you going to learn that you cannot contain BB? She likes to think outward, expanding things, while you like to think narrowly, focusing upon a particular aspect of something. You both just have to accept that you have different styles of thinking.

Swampman: Let's not go over that again. We all have different ways of arguing. Normally, when I'm by myself, at home, I'm a very slow, a very deliberate thinker. Being in here allows me to think off the cuff.

Vatbrain83: I didn't even know you were here, Cyborg. Yes, we all know how BB thinks and how I think. Sure, I think it appropriate to use the word "will," or, I think the word we use now is "willpower." But I'm not convinced that we need to immediately bring ethics into the equation. It's funny, BB. When I first met you, you hated talking about ethics/morality. Now you seem to bring an ethical aspect to every question almost every time you come in here. I'm not against that per se, I just find it intriguing that you've changed so much.

Beingbecoming: We have these different levels of willing. It's difficult not to expand the word "willpower" to "will to power." How much force, or power, is behind our will, our decision to act. It almost seems like a physics problem. Calculating the force behind our will in each particular case. Some actions have no power and no will—they are involuntary/unintentional. We usually don't hold someone accountable ethically for an act they commit without willpower. Some actions are "deliberate"—when we are alone, thinking about something, maybe even planning a future action. "Thinking off the cuff"—that is a kind of—at least, I would argue—a kind of communal thinking. But I don't think The Will is just our thoughts—it is our past, our experience, and our emotions.

ThunkChat, 6:46 PM

Swampman: All will-powered actions are future-oriented. It's just a question of for how long we are thinking about the future. Are we sitting for hours, planning something? Or is it maybe just an instant, a split second of future thought?

Vatbrain83: Future, future, future. What about the present? Right now I'm typing my thoughts—but I didn't plan these thoughts, I didn't think about them moments ago. They are just coming to me; rather, they are happening to me. But they are me—they are MY thoughts. And as anyone who knows my kind of thinking can attest (BB and Swampy know me pretty well), these are the kinds of thoughts I also have when I am thinking deliberately.

2cyborg: You've all lost me.

Beingbecoming: There are individual actions and group actions. This may sound weird, but I would argue that group actions can also occur without thought, without deliberation. The will of the group can be transmitted without words (just think of a political rally, a rock concert, the stock market, a revival meeting). In the Western tradition, the thinking is that Reason and Emotions are separate. I believe that part of the reason for this is because one cannot form an argument based upon emotions. Saying to someone, "You're wrong—I know it because I have a gut feeling," is not a powerful argument—even though your gut feeling may be 100% correct—because it is based upon your past experiences, your learning.

Swampman: That's what I'm saying, VB! What about the present? I'm not sure.

2cyborg: One thing I can say, as a technology theorist, tools pull us toward the future. Tools frame our will.

Beingbecoming: The present is either the enaction of past thoughts (deliberate willing made real), or our past embodied in our gut. For example, a police officer is trained to act a certain way in certain situations. That officer may have even served in the military—so they have this vast background of training. But most of that training is not in their mind—it is just background, absorbed into their body, their gut. If a policeman works in a certain neighborhood, he will over time get a feel for the place, for the people. His gut will tell him who is dangerous and who is harmless. So, rounding a corner—he sees a man, and his gut tells him that this man is suspicious—the man reaches into his waist—and the officer's gut reaction is to shoot. The problem, of course, is that some officers do not have enough experience to reliably trust their gut. They shoot too soon. How do we know when to trust our gut and when not to? My own feeling is that our gut makes us follow it—if we have to think about following our gut, then we shouldn't follow it.

Vatbrain83: Where did that example come from?

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Down and up to Columbia—into a wine store. Through the bright aisles, the wood-paneled racks. Buying a bottle—Mendoza.

A man standing outside walking up to Kyin. “Can I have some change?” he asks.

Handing him a dollar. “You want something from McDonald’s?” she asks, she points.

“No,” the man says. “I already ate.”

Kyin watching him walking toward 18th Street.

8:14 PM

Sitting drinking watching a film.



10:03 PM

Clicking off the screen.

Dozing.

Tuesday, November 10th

Windy, 42°

5:49 AM

Coughing Kyin holding her head. To the kitchen boiling water—hot tea.

Bread into the toaster—toast.

On the couch sipping eating.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:01 AM

Male Anchor: The Horse Flu is now resurging, with more than 9500 dead nationwide.

Female Anchor: Also in the news, Democrats and Republicans can't seem to agree—will they ever? More later. How about the weather, Paul?

Weatherman: We've got a cold front coming in here folks! More later—including our five-day forecast.

Male Anchor: Also in the news, a man goes on a shooting rampage in Kentucky. Details ahead.

Female Anchor: Stay tuned.

Grabbing rubbing
her throat.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Lifting dialing her phone.

Cell, 6:09 AM

CHC: Hello?

Kyin: Hi, Mom—are you driving?

CHC: Oh, yes—Kyin, are you ok?

Kyin: Yes, I'm fine—why'd you ask that?

CHC: I just have a feeling. Is something wrong?

Kyin: No, I just woke up with—I think I have the flu or something.

CHC: Oh no—is it Horse Flu? You should go to a doctor.

Kyin: It's not Horse Flu—no, I was just calling to ask—what's that one medicine you gave me last year, where can I get it?

CHC: Medicine?

Kyin: Yeah—you know, it was in the brown bottle? It's really thick?

CHC: Oh, yes, ok. I have some at home. Do you want to come here?

Kyin: Can I buy it down here? What's the name of it?

CHC: It's—oh, I can't remember. You should go to a doctor, ok?

Kyin: No—it's just the flu, ok? I get this every year. Ok, mom. I need to sleep, ok? Bye.

Standing walking
to the kitchen,
pouring another
mug of tea.

To the window—
looking down.
Mr. Dixon
standing smoking.
Sipping Kyin
moving along the
window—pacing,
watching.

Mr. Dixon pocketing his hands. Breathing a blue billow white. The wind pushing hair flat across his head.

Stopping her pacing to sip and stare.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor*44—dropping and stepping on his cigarette.

Kyin carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open *Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad*.

Looking over the streets.

11:39 AM

Coughing moving to bed.

Pulling the blanket over her head.

1:27 PM

The ringing phone.

Cell, 1:27 PM

Kyin: Hello?

Kerry: Helen? I'm sorry, is this a bad time?

Kyin: Oh—Mrs. Thompson. Oh, no, I just have a little bug. I guess my voice sounds off? I went and talked to Marcus, thank you for setting that up. He gave me—told me some background. I haven't found her yet, but I feel like I'm getting a feel for your husband.

Kerry: That's good. Yeah, a few of my coworkers have that bug—it's going around. Marcus is a little tough, but he's alright. If you ever talk to him again, he'll be more open—that's the kind of guy he is. I—I can't remember what I wanted to tell you. It was something—yes. I wanted to tell you that Robert, about Robert. This past year, he'd changed a lot. And we, the two of us—we. He, on the job, you can find it in the old papers, I guess, he was on the job and he shot a young boy. And he never—Robert would never talk about his job, really, but that—that boy. I would try to get him to talk about it, but he would just. I just hoped that maybe he talked about it with Marcus. But who knows. Every now and then—those two, they would sit on the porch and drink and talk—and every now and then I would go to the window and listen. But it was never anything—it was always just, you know, talk about sports or fishing, maybe about women. Never about work.

Kyin: Do you know why the—was the boy a criminal? Was he trying to shoot your husband?

Cell, 1:30 PM

Kerry: Well—I, I mean, all I know about it is from what the paper and the television said. Robert would never talk about it. They said the boy was probably involved in a gang. His parents—his mother was angry. But Robert. After that, he just stopped—our relationship, I mean. I've known Robert for so long. So I always thought it was because of this boy. But now this woman comes, so I—so, anyway, that's what I wanted to tell you. If you want to look up the story, it was back in March. The boy, Deandre Stephens was his name. I do remember that. He was a—just a kid.

Kyin: Ok. Thank you, Mrs. Thompson. I will look it up.

Kerry: Yes, alright. Thank you again for doing this. Please take care of yourself.

Kyin: I will. Goodbye.

Standing from
the bed.

To the kitchen for
water cold.

Dressing—pants,
sweater, socks,
jacket, shoes.

Down and up to

Connecticut.

Coming down Connecticut to Florida—into Rite Aid.

Through the bright aisles.

Shelves stacked with medicine—pills and tablets and ointments. Creams made for drinking, for rubbing.

Buying flu powder and liquids, pills and orange juice.

Climbing up Florida—a man sitting in a wheelchair, holding out his hand, a white foam cup.

Kyin putting a bill in the cup—smiling at the smiling man.

2:11 PM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen—measuring medicine, heating water.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open *Cameras—Neighborhoods—Barry Farm*.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 2:20 PM

Where was the dog?

Over the weekend, I put cameras in Barry Farm. Partly because I've been bored with Trinidad. Nothing much has been happening there recently. I used to be able to watch Anisa—going to school, coming home, playing in the yard. But now she stays inside most of the time. Little cute Anisa.

One thing about Barry Farm—Trinidad is pretty much flat; Barry Farm is not as flat. In the distance, across the river, is downtown DC.

Really, comparing the two neighborhoods just doesn't make sense. Trinidad is more similar in geography/architecture to Adams Morgan than it is to Barry Farm. Barry Farm is long beige buildings.

This reminds me: Quarles Street is most similar to Maryland Avenue—very similar buildings—long brick—both areas are next to a park with dead-end roads (Park Morton is also a dead-end road).

I brought this up though, to note that the cameras in Barry Farm can't see as far.

Waking this morning with the flu. I feel pretty nasty. My throat, my head, my nose, my eyes. Been drinking tea all day, medicine. Slept some.

This morning watching Neighbor 44—he didn't have his dog. Without the dog, he seemed like a completely different person. Pushing his hands into his pockets (it's a really windy day today), smoking. It just gave me an odd feeling. Something was off.

Kerry—Mrs. Thompson called.

One of the medicines I just took is making me sleepy.

Last night I had a dream of Chun Doo Hwan. He was visiting Burma—making an arms deal. I was watching him. I had a bomb with me—I don't know where I got it. It was in my jacket pocket. I watched Chun Doo Hwan sitting with General Ne Win—the two laughing. The General was smiling, speaking about Rangoon University.

I put the bomb under Chun's car—somehow attaching it with paper clips. My back covered in mud.

Then I started crying—I felt so happy!—watching him explode, pieces of his body flying into the air.

The sound of steam—whistling.

To the kitchen, pouring water hot over flu powder. Stirring the mug.

Back to the couch, sitting typing.

Looking over the streets of Barry Farm.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Into the bed—between sheets, blankets.

Pulling from her pocket the stone—holding it in her fist closed.

Sleeping.

Wednesday, November 11th

7:18 AM

Sunny, 41°

Down, down, down.

Doors closing, step back to allow the doors to close.

Sliding into a booth.

Dozing.

7:42 AM

Coming down from the platform.

Stepping onto the 55 Bus.

Dozing.

8:28 AM

Coughing Kyin knocking on the door—her mother answering.

“Oh,” she says, “I didn’t know you were coming today.”

Nodding Kyin. “Do you have that medicine?” she asks.

Her mother leading her to the kitchen—pouring the brown liquid.

10:15 AM

Coughing Kyin sitting outside of Patrick Walker’s house.

Flipping through radio stations.

1:26 PM

Patrick Walker coming from the house, closing and locking the door.

Into a police cruiser—driving through the development, out onto 118.

Kyin following—snapping pictures.

2:17 PM

Patrick Walker slow moving through Trinidad.

Coming into Langston—Carver.

Kyin following—snapping pictures.

5:12 PM

Patrick Walker driving through Holbrook Terrace.

Down West Virginia, Florida—back up Maryland.

Down Hechinger Mall—parking.

Kyin following—snapping pictures.

Patrick Walker disappearing into a long brick building.

7:19 PM

Patrick Walker exiting the building.

Kyin snapping pictures.

Thursday, November 12th

Cloudy, 46°

6:12 AM

Coughing Kyin into the kitchen for orange juice cold. Making tea and toast.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs—the local news.

6:29 AM

Sipping Kyin standing looking down on Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*.

Mr. Dixon standing smoking with pocketed hands, his collar turned up.

He answers his phone and begins talking, turning his back to Kyin.

The smoke rising from his head.

6:49 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad*.

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Barry Farm*.

Clicking open her email, her blog.

Blog, 6:50 AM

Neighbor 44 again standing smoking without his dog. Where the heck is that dog? I still have the flu. Went to Mom's house and she gave me some medicine. Checked up on Patrick Walker—followed him all the way down to Trinidad. I was sick as a dog that day. I sat outside some apartment complex—actually, it was in Langston—waiting for him in the windy weather. Just sitting there, getting sicker, and I never found out why he went in there, what he was doing.

Email Inbox, 6:50 AM

From: Darger

Choi,
Energy,
Where are you?
I'm back in the hospital.
Yep, these hospitals now are wired.

Blog, 7:17 AM

I'm attaching here some pictures of him going into and coming out of the building. No sign of anyone else.

I was sitting there thinking about the jargon "terrorist." The American Revolutionaries—the Minutemen—were terrorists. Or, at least "insurgents". So, too, the French Resistance. Nat Turner. Countless other examples. Most guerrilla fighters are considered terrorists. But guerrilla combat (a jargon) is a methodology. How is methodology connected to ideology? "Guerrilla", "insurgent", "terrorist."

"Terrorist", of course, is a jargon used to point at someone else. One does not refer to oneself as a terrorist. "They are terrorists," never, "I am a terrorist." The word "terrorist," then, is one of those jargons that tells us more about the person or group using it than it tells us about the person or group being described.

(Another such word is "ideology." It is always "You have an ideology," never, "I have an ideology.")

But what if the government itself is a terrorist? Bureaucratically killing the people through both inaction and action—intentional and unintentional.

State-sponsored terrorism. "Death squads" would be an obvious example.

Most state terrorism is much more subtle. Police officers kill citizens one at a time (the officer's name always withheld, the officer always cleared for the crime) rather than 100 people at once. They kill "ordinary" citizens rather than those likely to become martyrs (imagine if a cop shot a celebrity! Imagine if a cop shot a White person!).

New Communities Initiative—class warfare.

Kim Jong Il thinking about his father, Kim Il Sung. Hackers qua terrorists? Kim Jong Il sitting watching Hollywood films—fantasizing. He kidnaps a director, an actresses—"Make my fantasy! Act in my fantasy!" he tells them. His whole life is an extended fantasy. "Believe in my fantasy along with me!" he tells his citizens, "Or die!"

Email Inbox, 7:17 AM

From: Darger

Actually, each on is different. I've found that some hospitals believe that the way to healing is through isolation. Cutting us off from the world. The idea being, "They'll miss the world so much that they'll decide to like living."

But other hospitals, like this one, are a bit more pragmatic.

I need a cause—give me a cause!

That is to say, they are a bit less behavioristic, less trying to shape our minds by inhibiting our actions.

I wanted to know more about your brother and about your problems with your arm.

Blog, 7:50 AM

Puts people in death camps—slaves. Shoots a father in front of his family.

“This is my fantasy—believe it, or you will end up like your father—a bullet in the head!” Kim Jong Il, sitting behind his canasta glasses. Pathetic old shit.

Kim Jong Un watching his father, thinking about his grandfather.

Kim Jong Chul looking over at his younger brother.

I no longer have Ian to tell me stories. He’s left me to craft them myself.

Our father hated the US and Chun Doo Hwan, Roh Tae Woo.

Ian hates Kim Jong Il.

He would get me fired up about it as well. But often I just could not care less. Who gives a damn about that wacko, I’d say to him. There’s nothing to be done.

Kim Jong Chul—he just can’t feel the same level of hatred as his brother. He reads, watches television. He prefers video games to his father’s films. War games.

His younger brother, Kim Jong Un, is devoted to the military. He is always guarded, always reserved.

Kim Jong Chul—he’s my age. Like his father, he’s always struggled with his weight. His young brother, though—Jong Un—is a health fanatic—running every morning, eating a well-organized diet.

Kim Jong Chul—looking at his older brother, Kim Jong Nam: overweight—a businessman. The Fat Bear, they call him. An expert at computers. His younger brother, reminding himself of how he once was. They used to play basketball together—he taught his younger brother. He can still shoot quite well, but he’s not as in shape as Jong Un.

Email Inbox, 7:50 AM

From: Darger

So I thought it fair to tell you more about myself. Maybe it’s just because most of the other people in 4Humours are boring. This is the third time I’ve ended up in a hospital in the Autumn. A teenage girl sits in the corner and watches TV. I surf around online. A 40-year old guy plays pool all day. When I list things like that, people doing those things, this place doesn’t sound half bad does it?

Maybe like some kind of spa—a retreat. Magic Mountain. Somehow, though, it manages to be the most boring place in the world. The boringness grates on me. Which means I’ll probably write you again.

Darger

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Looking over the streets of Barry Farm, of Trinidad.

6:49 PM

Coming into *Crime Café*. Fiela on the phone—sitting against the glass, smiling.

Kyin ordering a tea and brandy milk.

Fiela folding the phone. “You still have a cold?” she asks.

Nodding Kyin. “Something or other,” she says.

The waiter bringing drinks, menus.

“I wish they had sullongtang,” says Kyin. “I’ll just get chicken soup.”

“A New York Strip—bloody,” says Fiela.

The waiter writing nodding—walking away.

Fiela drinking. “Cate is still down in the mountains?”

Nodding Kyin. “What’s Tisha up to?”

“Still teaching, still taking classes—still hating them.”

Through the window—rain coming down.

The two watching and listening—people running through the rain.

9:10 PM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold. Orange juice.

Swallowing medicine.

Onto the couch.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the television.

Flickering images, bright against the room black.

Dozing.

Friday, November 13th

Rain, 39°

9:12 AM

Coming down West Virginia—Clarksburg.

Following Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*.

The black sedan parking in front of *M.I.C.E.*. Coughing Kyin pulling into the lot adjacent.

Pulling her camera from her bag.

The driver comes out of the car holding opening an umbrella. Mr. Dixon exits the vehicle—standing stretching under the umbrella.

Shooting Kyin.

The two walk to the entrance, Mr. Dixon halting raising his hand—reaching into his blazer and pulling out cigarettes.

Mr. Dixon standing smoking. The driver holding the umbrella over their heads.

Smoke rolling into a cloud.

Shooting Kyin.

11: 12 AM

Dozing Kyin with lidded eyes, the seat reclined fully.

Steam-clouded windows.

“What?” says waking Kyin.

“Oh,” she says.

Raising the seat. From her bag, an handkerchief—wiping the windows.

Coughing Kyin exiting—standing stretching in the rain.

Leaning over the car—water damping her hair, running down the folds of her jacket.

11:27 AM

A group of men exiting the M.I.C.E. building. Mr. Dixon leading the way.

The group enters several cars.

The engines humming, exhaust clouds blowing out into the rain.

Out onto Bridgeport Hill—climbing the ramp onto 79 North.

11:37 AM

The line of cars exiting at 124—Jerry Dove Drive.

“Aissh,” says Kyin.

Continuing up 79 North.

12:02 PM

Down Route 73, following the river, forking into the Monongahela.

Pulling into a hotel—parking.

Checking in.

12:22 PM

Into the room, the bathroom.

Coming out, emptying her bag. Plugging in the computer, the camera.

Grabbing the roomkey, a handful of change—walking down the hall.

From the vending machine—a bottle of water, a bag of chips, a snickers.

Back into the room. Pills from the bag—swallowed with water cold.

Clicks on a film—silent.



Eating a candy bar and chips.

2:17 PM

Carrying the computer to the bed.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 2:18 PM

Down in West Virginia—Fairmont. I woke up this morning, still sick—standing sipping tea, watching Mr. Dixon.

No dog.

My gut told me to follow him. To pack my bag. Perhaps I—my gut—really just wanted to come down here, to see things again.

It's insanely beautiful. Crisp windy autumn.

I drive and drive—the rain—my throat, nose—my head. My neck, my boobies.

Blog, 2:20 PM

Neighbor 44 parking at M.I.C.E., going inside for a few hours. Comes out with a group of men—they drive to the FBI CJIS Center.

I continued on up to Fairmont—again, following my gut. I can't do anything down there in Clarksburg except sit and watch a building.

I've been gradually realizing that I need to pay attention to money. I don't have enough money, really, to go to Korea. This money spent on cameras, on coming down here. I've still got enough to get by, but going to Korea would hurt the bank.

Checking her email.

Email Inbox, 2:24 PM

From: Darger

Choi,

I'm still bored out of my mind in here, so I thought I'd write again. Ho hum. This will be one of those boring emails. Hum te tum. Yep, I'm bored.

From here I can see that girl sitting watching TV. She sits with her legs curled under herself. She has her hair dyed black and black fingernails. You know what she watches all day? Soap operas. You fucking believe that?

The old man—sometimes he just walks down the hallway here—it's a long hallway—then comes to the end and starts yelling. He always gives me the evil eye when he's walking by. They come out around 6 bringing a big cart full of medicine, handing it to us in paper cups. What an odd place this is.

That's all for now.

Darger

Carrying the computer to the table.

Stretching looking out the window.

A man in a suit sitting in a car.

A woman walking a dog.

A family jumping out of a van, the kids running to the entrance of the hotel.

A man standing smoking holding a leash, an hound.

5:17 PM

Driving through the streets of Fairmont.

Eating soup at a restaurant.

6:29 PM

Coming into the room.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

Drinking medicine liquid and solid.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 6:35 PM

It is a kind of madness to struggle against the state. To question the government, it's workings, it's justifications, rationalizations. One becomes swamped in the mire of political rhetoric. A game that politicians only half know they are playing (they think there is some underlying reality). They flounder along, waiting for their moment of demagoguery—"Tell me what you want to hear, so I can be re-elected!" Public opinion polls.

Money and games.

Lobbyists.

I'm sitting here in bed, still sick—tired.

What the hell am I doing down here in West Virginia? Why did I listen to my gut?

I'm too sick for this shit.

What can a single individual accomplish?

The law—government—is a religion. "Separation of Church and State," "Render unto Caesar." Both of these statements saying, in effect: "These two religions must not conflict. They must reach a truce."

"Religion"—a jargon.

"State"—a jargon.

What is a religion? What makes a religion a religion? 501(c)(3).

1) A religion needs a system of symbols. The Washington Monument, the Capitol Building, the Lincoln Memorial (the McMillan Plan). Juche Tower. Past historical figures—George Washington, Abe Lincoln. These people die and become symbols (apotheosized). George Washington is not a person; he is, rather, a symbol for The United States of America. Kim Il Sung is not a person; he is, rather, a symbol for North Korea. George Washington, Kim Il Sung, each had to sit on the toilet with diarrhea. They farted—they got sick. They died. Museums help establish and maintain National/Religious identity. Museums are Churches.

Blog, 6:56 PM

2) A set of rules/guidelines establishing a set of practices/rituals. The Law. Voting (a farce). Bills.
3) Separation of Sacred and Profane. The Law sets up the system.

Commandments:

Do Not Commit Larceny

Do Not Commit Murder or Manslaughter

(Involuntary or Premeditated)

Do Not Exceed the Speed

Limit

Do Not Commit Petty Theft

Do Not Rape

Do Not Commit Burglary

Do Not Commit Fraud

DO NOT

DO NOT

DO NOT

DO NOT

Fuck the State qua Religion. I want none of it.

What is the State doing for Trinidad? For Park Morton, Quarles, Carver Langston, Barry Farm? Motherfucking Federal Government destroying DC.

The State's answer is to bulldoze everything, to ship poor people out to the suburbs, to Maryland, to Virginia.

The State's answer is cameras on traffic lights, NSA data mining, ECHELON, EINSTEIN 3, listening, wiretapping, FBI CODIS CJIS BMOC NCIC. DHS.

Is that the answer we want?

Fuck no.

Do we want bureaucrats muddling through, slogging to decide our lives?

Fucking committees?

Between 1865 and 1968—over 100 years! Do you believe that shit?

That's government efficiency at work.

US-VISIT—what the fuck is that shit?

Biometric RFID bullshit motherfuckers.

My fucking head hurts.

Email Outbox, 6:56 PM

To: Darger

Darger,

What do you want out of life?

Do you want to continue floating along, not knowing where you're going?

You are letting life happen to you. Life must be lived.

You hate life, right?

That's why you keep trying to kill yourself. Quit that shit.

If you want a path to follow, I'll show you the way.

If you want a cause, I'll give you a cause.

Don't call me Choi anymore.

Energy

Closing the computer—packing it in her bag.

Dressing—down to the lobby, checking out.

7:12 PM

Driving over the mountains—down Route 250.

Flat straight stretches of road.

Curves and hills.

Trees and fields.

Onto Route 33.

10:49 PM

Coming down Virginia—Harrisonburg.

Checking into a hotel.

Saturday, November 14th

Cloudy, 39°

7:10 AM

Carrying the computer to the bed.

Clicking open her email.

Opening her phone—placing a call.

<p>Email Inbox, 7:11 AM</p> <p>From: Darger</p> <p>Energy,</p> <p>Yes, I'm bored. I don't know what to think about life, about living.</p> <p>What's the point?</p> <p>So tell me what to do. I'm game.</p> <p>No joke,</p> <p>Darger</p>	<p>Cell, 7:11 AM</p> <p>Cate: Hello?</p> <p>Kyin: Hi.</p> <p>Cate: Kyin? Is that you?</p> <p>Kyin: Yes.</p> <p>Cate: Wow, I haven't heard your voice in a long time. It's so good to hear you. I'm so lonely down here. What's going on?</p> <p>Kyin: I'm here. In Harrisonburg. I was bored, so I decided to come down.</p>
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Email Outbox, 7:17 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

The individual and the group are not mutually exclusive. The individual can work to the betterment of the group. The group can provide an environment for furthering the individual. An individual within a cohesive group environment can achieve more than an individual working in isolation. The group becomes an extension of the individual.

To give you a cause, I need to know where you live.

Energy

Email Outbox, 7:21 AM

To: Anisa

Anisa,

Hello, my young friend. What have you been up to?

Tell me about your life.

Tell me more about your country, about where you live.

I live in the US—you know that, right? I live in Washington, DC.

Tell me about you.

How do you feel about your government?

Your friend,

Choi

Cell, 7:17 AM

Cate: What! You're here!

What—where are you?

Kyin: I'm over next to 81, the Holiday Inn. Where are you?

You wanna meet up?

Cate: Kyin—I—I mean, what are you—you came to see me?

Kyin: Sure. What was I doing up there? Nothing, just sitting around. I figured I may as well come down here and see the sights. Is it ok? Am I messing up your work?

Cate: No—no, it's ok. Only, I'm only here for few more days—then I have to go through the mountains. Kyin—oh, I'm so glad you're here, I was going crazy down here. I thought—you didn't email me back, so I thought you were mad or something.

Kyin: No—we can talk about that later. Where can we meet up? Is there a good breakfast place in town?

Cate: I—ok, yes. Oh, Kyin! Yes, ok, alright. Yes, there's a place on Main Street, you can't miss it—do you know how to get to Main Street?

Kyin: I think I can manage. I'll see you in ten minutes or so.

Cate: Kyin! I—ok. Ok, bye.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Down and out to the car.

7:48 AM

Coming into the parking lot.

Cate standing waving.

Kyin exiting standing walking to Cate.

Cate hugging Kyin.

"Kyin!" she says. "What're you doing here! I—"

Crying Cate.

Smiling Kyin.

"Let's get something to eat," she says.

Nodding Cate wiping her cheeks, her eyelashes.

7:58 AM

Sitting ordering.

"So," says Kyin—drinking.

"Thanks so much for coming," says Cate, "I just—"

"Cate," says Kyin, "Ok—your email pissed me off, ok?"

Cate lowering her head.

Leaning Kyin. "I can't be friends with you," she says, "unless you're straight with me—ok? I don't care about your job's—about—whatever rules your job might give you. If we're friends, then you have to—I don't care about any of that, ok? Our friendship has to come before your job."

Cate looking down.

Leaning Kyin grabbing Cate's hand.

"Cate," she says.

Cate looking up.

Smiling Kyin. "I want us to be friends—ok?"

Nodding Cate.

"I just can't deal with that—all that—" Kyin leaning back, "Is your—are they spying on me? Looking at my emails? I need to know about this."

"I'm sorry," says Cate. "I wanted to—"

Kyin pointing, "I know you wanted to, but you chose your job over our friendship, ok? That's how I see it. And if that's how it's going to be, then I don't want any part of it."

The two quiet.

The waiter bringing plates, the coffee hot.

11:27 AM

The two sitting off Main Street—Denton Park.

Kyin with crossed arms. "Who exactly do you work for?" she asks.

Cate with her head lowered.

"The NSA," she says. "National Security Agency."

Nodding Kyin. "Ok—good," she says, "And what is that? What do you do?"

"We provide security," says Cate. "Computers."

"Cate," says Kyin, turning her head, "That's about as vague as you can get. Do they teach you to answer questions like that?"

Nodding Cate looking at Kyin.

"Yes," she says. "They teach us everything."

8:14 PM

Sitting in Cate's hotel room.

The two drinking vodka iced.

"I thought you were sick," says beaming Cate.

Nodding Kyin.

Standing pouring drinks.

"The NSA," says Kyin.

"Yes," says smiling Cate.

Kyin carrying the drinks to the couch, to Cate.

"What're you doing here?" asks Kyin. "What do you do?"

Nodding Cate drinking.

"I figure out programs," says Cate.

Nodding Kyin drinking. "Ok," she says.

Cate leaning into Kyin. "Programs for how to listen to people," she says. "Right now—the way it's set up now, these Navy guys, they sit there and listen. So, I'm figuring out how to get a computer to do the listening for them. A computer to filter out all the unnecessary stuff."

Kyin shaking her head. "I still don't get it," she says.

Cate sitting up, holding her palms flat. “Ok,” she says. “What we do—basically, the NSA, what we do is—OWL—Observe, Watch, Listen. We observe people, we watch people, and we listen to people.”

Cate touching Kyin’s arm.

“It sounds redundant, and it’s supposed to be” says Cate, “because we do it both in real life and in mediated format. We observe someone however we can—online, in person, from a satellite, from a traffic camera, by reading their email, their blog. We watch someone in real life, and we watch someone on a surveillance camera—a cellphone picture, whatever we can, whatever works. We listen to someone’s real voice, and we listen to their recorded voice—telephone calls, whatever—by any means necessary.”

Standing Kyin.

“It’s a war,” says Cate.

Cate sitting drinking watching Kyin pacing.

11:49 PM

Moaning Cate sleeping.

Kyin writing a note.

Cate,
I’m going home.
You have to leave soon anyway.
I need to think.
I’ll see you when you come back, ok?
I need to know more about the NSA, about what you do.
I’m not mad.
I think I know why you do what you do.
I just need to think.

Kyin

Placing the note on Cate’s bag.

Exiting Kyin.

Monday, November, 16th

Sunny, 43°

5:56 AM

Pacing looking down on Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*.

Mr. Dixon standing smoking—hands in pockets.

Dressing, grabbing her bag, her keys.

Down the hallway, the stairwell.

Coming outside—walking standing next to Mr. Dixon.

“Can I borrow a smoke?” asks Kyin.

Mr. Dixon raising his lids—looking at Kyin.

Nodding—reaching into his pocket, handing her a cigarette. Kyin pulls out the cigarette from the pack, sliding it into her mouth—leaning toward his lighter.

“Thanks,” she says.

Pocketing her hands.

“Didn’t you used to have a dog?” she asks.

Exhaling Mr. Dixon. “I—yes,” he says. “He died.”

Nodding smoking Kyin. “I’m sorry,” she says.

The two standing smoking.

A car passing.

6:12 AM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:13 AM

Female Anchor: Also in the news today, a deadly shooting rampage in Tulsa. A man went into a grocery store and began shooting at the customers, killing four, including himself, and injuring several others. Authorities say that the man had left detailed plans for the shooting, including what time he planned to shoot himself and how many he planned to killed. What authorities do not know is why the man committed this act.

Making coffee.

Bread into the toaster.

Pouring orange juice.

Looking at the television—

“Dumbass,” says

Kyin. Cracking an egg

into the pan.

Sliding the egg onto the toast.

News, 6:16 AM

Male Anchor: What a tragedy. A housefire in Potomac, with firefighters battling the fire well into the early hours last night. Firefighters say that no one was injured but that the house was worth well over several million dollars.

Carrying the
plate, the mug,
the glass, to
the couch.
Mutes—CCs

the screen.

6:37 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email, her blog.

Blog, 6:37 AM

Cate—listening. I've got her to talk now—wrapped around my finger. She thinks I'm sad or angry, so she'll do whatever I want.

Neighbor 44—beginning.

Darger—waiting.

Anisa—?

I'm not sure where I'm at yet.

Kim Jong Il is on his way out.

I need to establish a plan, to make that plan explicit.

But first I need to think about it, think it over.

Email Inbox, 6:37 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

What group?

Is there some group you are specifically referring to?

I live near Seattle, Washington (US). You live in the US, too, right?

Darger

Email Inbox, 6:40 AM

From: Anisa

Choi,

It is funny. I do not know why you asked me about my government, but it is on my mind. I love my country. But my government, I am tired of its old ways. It is stuck in the past. My father and I do not agree on this. You are from Washington, DC. I am from Tehran. Two different worlds! I want to come to American for my graduate degree. I want to bring what I learn back to my country to make it a better place. I wish I could describe the ways things are. I know you must know about our president. But, believe it or not, he is not the problem. My generation, we shrug at him. He is popular because he is from a poor family. He speaks to the poor people of my country. He is brutal, but people like his pride. People in my country do not want us to be a puppet. What else do you want to know?

Your friend,

Anisa

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open chat.

ThunkChat, 6:45 AM

Vatbrain83: The be all and the end all.

Swampman: Macbeth?

Beingbecoming: The critical action. The decisive moment. What's the topic?

2cyborg: It's always the same old people in here. Where's the new blood?

Aether: I haven't been here in a while.

Vatbrain83: Yes, but no one notices you anyway, Aether. You're just a medium.

Swampman: Har har.

Beingbecoming: So what sort of action were you talking about? When I think of "The be all and the end all," I think of political action (Note: not a "political action committee").

Vatbrain83: What the hell kind of action can a committee accomplish?

Swampman: Are you kidding? That's how politics works: committees and chairpersons and time limits and blahblahblah. Call to order!

Beingbecoming: I would argue that that's how politics Does NOT work. That's how politics gives the semblance of working when actually they are just performing some little dance that accomplishes nothing. The name "political action committee" to me is laughable, an oxymoron. The only kind of action ever accomplished by these committees is political gamesmanship. Theater. Maneuvering.

Aether: So if they accomplish nothing, then how is political action, how is anything ever accomplished in politics?

Vatbrain83: Yes, I suppose committees are how things are run nowadays.

Beingbecoming: Nothing does happen. Government bureaucratic politics committees subcommittees—that kind of action is always action after the fact. Collecting the debris. Assessing the situation. Issuing a report. Politicians are capable only of RE-action.

Nothing they ever do can qualify as action. Real political action is accomplished by the people. Politicians wait for a disaster and then respond.

Swampman: I've seen many political rallies that accomplish nothing but the feeling of accomplishment.

Vatbrain83: It seems none of us has a particularly rosy view of politics.

Beingbecoming: That's the thing. No one except politicians has a rosy view of politics (and even many of them I'm sure don't have a great view of things). How could you have a rosy view of politics? It's a stupid game with stupid actors spouting stupid rhetoric.

ThunkChat, 6:50 AM

Aether: Yes, so you've all agreed to hate politics. What did that accomplish? What are you doing about it? This is what my friends do, they sit and whine about something and all it does is make them feel worse. Believe me, that's not why I come here to chat.

Vatbrain83: If our chatting is not up to your standards, by all means, feel free to leave.

Swampman: Too right! Angry yell, etc.

Beingbecoming: I am doing something about it. I'm sick of government in-action. Pathetic old wheeze bags. So I'm doing something about it.

Aether: What are you doing about it?

Beingbecoming: If you would like to join my group, feel free. I am recruiting. But it is not a group, per se. It works against groups. Against jargonizing. No jargons. No slogans. No chants. No set of fixed rules.

Vatbrain83: I don't get the joke, BB.

Beingbecoming: I understand that response, VB. Believe me, I do. I came here today with a specific purpose. The line, "The be all and the end all" was the perfect gateway. I've lived the past few years of my life getting angrier and angrier. I'm sick of the government voting to give themselves raises, spending billions of dollars on monuments and parks and energy emissions and tax systems when people just down the road from me are living in tenements and being shot on the street.

Beingbecoming: I know—this is all the tired old news we all see every day. But somehow—I just got sick of it all. Sick of seeing the same old news every day—stuffed in the back of the newspaper: "A man shot," "A man found shot," "A young man shot," "A young girl shot," "A man found with bullet wounds." If you want to know what I'm doing about it—ACTION. Not flashy bombs or protests, but subversive action to change the bullshit nonsense of our government. I believe most of the population is angry with our government. So I aim to slowly feed that anger, to make the people angrier.

Swampman: I'm with VB. I can't tell if this is a joke. It doesn't seem like a joke, but it doesn't sound like you, BB.

2cyborg: You still haven't said anything specific.

Beingbecoming: It doesn't sound like me because you don't know me. You really don't. This is me. This is the real me. I've reached my fucking limit. I won't give you any specifics, Aether, because we don't operate on specifics. This is not a political party with rules and guidelines and lobbyist backing. This is not a political action committee, priding ourselves on how good we are at phone calls or memos or networking skills—schmoozing.

ThunkChat, 7:14 AM

Beingbecoming: This is anger directed toward the lack of action. It is ACTION. I'm writing this here because I've been a part of some important philosophical discussions here (at least, important to me). But—I believe that philosophy is important, but that there is a point when it can only do so much, when philosophy becomes only so much naval gazing—ineffectual. Philosophy must give way to action, else life is only ever examined and never lived. Living—action—is itself a kind of examination of life.

Aether: I'm lost. This sounds a bit overdramatic to me. This is just a chatroom.

Swampman: I have frustrations, too, BB. Sometimes I just come here to chat, to pass the time, but sometimes I wonder what's the point? It doesn't mean you have to get angry, you have to leave.

Vatbrain83: I'm a little lost, too. But I disagree that this is “just” a chatroom. Chatrooms like this one have the ability to form a community. Just because we don't physically interact doesn't mean we can't form relationships. That's why seeing BB act like this has me worried.

Beingbecoming: You're right, VB, this is a community. I know this is an odd sort of rant. But you've probably noticed how I've been getting more and more impatient each time I'm in here. More and more prone to rambling, long paragraphs. If any of you want to communicate or to join me in my as-yet-undefined ACTION against government, I'm sending you here my email address. I have to go now.

Sliding the computer, the camera, a notepad into the bag.

Stepping into a jacket.

Down and up to Columbia.

8:11 AM

Stepping up onto the H1 Bus.

9:02 AM

Coming into Park Morton—long buildings brick with balconies.

Around back, a group of young men sitting talking.

The playground—children and women.

Sitting Kyin—looking at the women.

“Hello,” says Kyin.

The women nodding.

“Hello,” says the woman closest.

The women staring at Kyin.

“My name's Energy,” says Kyin.

The women staring.

"What I do," she says, "is I go to those parts of the city that are ignored by the government, and I talk to the people there, and I tell them how to fight back."

The women staring.

"Does that sound like something of interest to you?"

"Who do you work for?" asks the woman closest.

"This an anti-political organization. I hate politics. I don't work for anyone. I just go around and try to get people angry."

The women staring.

Another woman leans forward. "You mean protests," she says. "We've had people come do that."

"Trying to get us to vote," says another woman.

"No," says Kyin. "I think protests are nonsense," she says. "And I think voting is a waste of time. I'm not for peaceful friendly begging the government. I'm for getting angry and doing something."

The women staring.

"Think about it," says Kyin. "If you want to keep living letting the government run you over, bulldozing your houses, cops killing your sons, gangs and drug dealers, fine. If you want to get angry and do something, then I'll help you out."

Standing Kyin.

"I'll be back," says Kyin. "But so you know, I'm not talking about peaceful hugging holding hands. I'm talking about action."

The women looking at each other. Then turning watching Kyin walking away.

10:37 AM

Visiting Carver—Langston.

Talking to the women.

11:55 AM

Visiting Quarles Street.

Talking to the women, a few men.

1:20 PM

Visiting Barry Farm.

Talking to the women, a few children, a few young men.

Wednesday, November 18th

Partly Cloudy, 42°

6:04 AM

Jacket, jeans—down and out to the sidewalk, standing next to Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*.

“Can I borrow a smoke?” asks Kyin.

Mr. Dixon nodding—reaching into his pocket, handing her a cigarette. Kyin pulls out the cigarette from the pack, sliding it into her mouth—leaning toward his lighter.

“Thanks,” she says.

Pocketing her hands.

“What was your dog’s name?” asks Kyin.

Mr. Dixon exhaling. “Cheka,” he says.

“Checkers?”

“No,” says Mr. Dixon. “Cheka.”

Nodding dragging Kyin.

The two standing smoking.

A car passing.

6:20 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Outbox, 6:20 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

The group has no name—that, first and foremost. If someone asks you the name of your group, tell them, “The group has no name.” It is not a group. Recruit people, ok? You’re smart, I know you can do this. Get out of that place and begin action.

Recruit your friends.

If they ask what you are recruiting them for, just say, “It doesn’t really matter, we’re not a group anyway.” Show them my emails if you like.

The group has rules, but those rules are always heuristic—temporary.

No rules are fixed rules.

The group has no slogans or mottos or protocol. This is called jargon smashing. (In time, term’s like “jargonizing” “jargon smashing,” “jargon”—they, too, will be gotten rid of. But for now they will act as stepping stones.)

Email Outbox, 6:20 AM

To: Darger

All rules are only stepping stones that will be later displaced. The group is not a group. It is more an assemblage—a network—no fixed center. The aim is not to destroy government, but to bypass politics.

Politics is games.

Politics is money.

Politics is class warfare.

Politics is rigid/fixed.

The un-group is a reaction to all of this.

The un-group heuristically recognizes the reckless folly and stupidity of past radical groups (Red Army, Red Brigades, Weather Underground, etc). Those groups bred hate and ignorance and murder. They were full of mindless leftist rhetoric and propaganda.

We do not bomb or assassinate for attention. That is for clowns. If we must bomb or assassinate, it is done so that no one will notice. A bomb that seems like an accident—an “incident.”

We plant seeds of dissent. We are a virus seeping into various local communities—nodes.

Each member of the un-group is known as a “node.”

We do not promote ourselves with posters and protests and yelling and screaming. We are a cancer, growing unseen, unnoticed, into tumors—metastasizing. But we do not kill the host—rather, we gradually alter its consciousness—so slowly that it does not realize that it has been changed. A cancer of the mind; a cancer of consciousness.

We do not kill—we reprogram.

Each local community has its own areas to address. Find the local issue in your area and infect it—destroy it. For example, one of the major problem areas in my city is the police and gang members killing citizens. I aim to infect and kill this growth.

Community organizers/PACs accomplish little except to promote their own organization or politician.

WE HATE POLITICIANS AND POLITICS. WE HATE VOTING. WE DO NOT SUPPORT AN OLIGARCHY (PLUTOCRACY).

Nuance, flux, action. The un-group is angry not hateful (nuance).

WE DO NOT SUPPORT EITHER/OR THINKING.

BOTH/AND BOTH/AND BOTH/AND.

Email Inbox, 6:22 AM

To: Darger

Ok, so you get the point right? That's a bunch of guidelines above—all of which will probably be later heuristically erased. For now, those will give you a general idea—stepping stones.

Darger—in Washington State, Yakima, is an NSA listening post. I want you to read up on it, ok? Go check it out.

Darger—this un-group's rules are always changing. That means that you need to modify what I am saying, making your own changes—this is your obligation. Email me back these modifications. Tell this to those you recruit.

Modification, nuance.

Contact me in a few weeks.

Energy

Email Inbox, 6:35 AM

From: Swampman

Beingbecoming,

What the heck is going on with you?

Are you serious about all of this?

Because, I mean, we all know the philosopher kings should rule the world, right?

Ha.

Write me back,

Swampy

Email Outbox, 6:38 AM

To: Swampman

Swampy,

I'm not sure what philosophy does. "Do philosophy," they say—ok, then what is it we are doing?

Sitting around talking.

I believe philosophy is important, and it has a point—but I've reached the end of that point. Obviously, I can't stop philosophizing. Philosophy is a foundation for action—a foundation (or a well, or whatever metaphor one prefers) to which one can always return.

Action first.

Beingbecoming

Carrying the computer to the desk.

To the kitchen—making eating breakfast.

8:42 AM

Coming into Langston.

Sitting on a picnic table—next to Lynn.

“You can’t come in here and tell them what to do,” says Lynn.

Lynn smoking.

Nodding Kyin.

“Telling people to be angry,” says Lynn. “We’re already angry. People here don’t trust anybody. People come and go. Police, government, social workers. System operators. They all come in with plans and promises. Then they all go.”

Lynn exhaling—looking at Kyin. “I believe you mean well,” she says, “But they have no reason to think you any different.”

Nodding Kyin.

Smoking Lynn. “Last year they come in here,” she says—exhaling.

Coughing, continuing, “They sign us up—voting,” she says. “And what good did that do? They doing anything for us now?”

Nodding Kyin.

A group of women with children coming around the corner of the building.

Walking toward the tables.

Kyin turning to Lynn. “I’m setting this up all over the city,” she says. “Can you run this area for me?” she asks. “Can you help me?”

The women surrounding the table, sitting.

“Help you what?” says a woman.

“I thought you were a reporter,” says another.

“No—yes,” says Kyin, turning to her, “I’m a reporter, but—we’re all reporters now,” she says.

“You’re a reporter, too,” she says.

11:04 AM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

Making tea.

Sitting sipping looking at the painting.

Lines and points crossing and connecting.

12:03 PM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 12:04 PM

I have no idea what I'm doing and I need to think this through. I've gone down to these various neighborhoods, talking to people—women—and one thing's clear—I don't know what I'm doing.

Doing is knowing—but I'm not even doing.

The only person I could talk to was Lynn, down in Langston. She straightened me out. 'These women want a goal—"Why are you here? What do you want?" They want to know my endgame—but I don't want an endgame. I want seeds—infection.

So how do I do that?

When I first met Lynn, she gave me a tour of her building and the area around it. We were walking down the hall, and she pointed to several piles of trash. She said something like, "I used to clean that up, but it was a neverending battle." I didn't know what to think of it then, but—looking back, now—that statement serves as a jargon for the situation.

What can a single individual accomplish?

Clean up a little—but the trash keeps piling up. New kids come and deal drugs. New cops drive through in their cruisers. A little problem adds up into another problem so that, after weeks, months, years, decades, centuries—the pile is too big. So the city, they look at the pile, and they say, "Let's bulldoze it, push it out of here—build New Communities." New Communities, of course, have no ties to the past. They erase the past. New Communities = New People. What happens to the Old Communities?

When I first went up to Park Morton, I went into a bar—*Juke*—and there were these older guys there, some a bit younger, in their 50s. They looked like they were waiting for someone like me to come in, someone they could give an earful to. At least, they looked like that to me. So I sat and listened—and one of the guys, I can't forget it—he started laughing, and he said something like, "New means White."

And—my first thought was—"No, that's an oversimplification. That's just too simple an analysis." But I'm still not really sure how to work it out.

New, I would say, means Not-One-of-Us. Now, Not-One-of-Us does not necessarily mean White or Rich.

New = Not-One-of-Us (NOoU).

NOoU is defined by what it is not (it is NOT, BY ALL MEANS, ONE OF US!). If you're poor, then everyone else is Not-Poor. They aren't "Middle class," or, "Upper Class," or this or that income bracket—yuppie/buppie, hipster—they are simply "Not-Poor".

Blog, 12:30 PM

There is also Not-Street. You are either “Street” or “Not-Street.” There is also Not-Black, Not-Latino, etc. For every group, there exists a corresponding “NOoU” group.

So, what happens, I think, is that the NOT ends up enveloping every other kind of category (jargon).

In the case of Park Morton—and Carver Langston, Barry Farm, Quarles, and Trinidad—NOoU often implicitly means Not-Black. This is primarily because DC is a majority Black city, with the effects of de facto segregation still lingering. In other parts of the country (often rural areas), NOoU is conflated with Not-Latino, Not-Poor, Not-Struggling, Not-Living-in-a-Trailer-Park, Not-Working-as-a-Migrant, etc.

Because someone is coming into a neighborhood with money, because they are tearing down the old—erasing the past—they are seen as a negative agent. NOoU.

It’s tied to the history of the neighborhood, the group—and it’s also tied to income level.

If you live in Potomac or Georgetown—you implicitly (but never explicitly) know all of your neighbors are doing well financially (though they might complain about stock market losses). In Potomac or Georgetown or Chevy Chase, NOoU = Poor, Working Class, or even Middle Class.

If you’re living in a housing complex that only allows people with “low income” to live there, then you implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) know that everyone else living there is just like you. Everyone there is struggling.

So, suddenly, the city comes in and tears the building down. And it’s no longer “low income” housing, it’s “mixed income” housing. For the poor people, it is “no housing.”

So you don’t know who is who. Who is NOoU? You know that you’re still poor—but you don’t know who else is poor. At least, at first. But you do know all the old faces.

You know they’re still poor. You feel more comfortable around them. It’s you and them surrounded by Not-Poor. And the Not-Poor are strangers. It’s not just that they don’t know you, that they don’t know anyone in the community—they also don’t even know each other.

They just live there—they’re not part of the group.

They’re the anti-group. NOoU

Ah, I don’t know where I’m going with this. Just typing as it comes to me.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Lying on the couch.

Dozing.

Thursday, November 19th

Showers, 40°

6:14 AM

Standing smoking next to Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*.

Mr. Dixon wearing a hat.

Kyin wearing a jacket, a sweatshirt—the hood over her hair, her head.

Smoking rising through the rain.

6:44 AM

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email.

Email inbox, 6:45 AM

From: 2Cyborg

Beingbecoming,

You need technology—that's your problem. And you need money. Do you have money? You can't accomplish anything without money. Government and banks and business—money. I mean, who owns all that stuff?

Look, I know how Vatbrain is and all the others, but I'm all for this sort of thing. But, I mean, I have to ask questions—MONEY. Where is the money? How the hell can you get anything down without money. Money, money, money. Am I making my position clear?

2Cyborg

Rubbing her head.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Into the kitchen for water cold—headache pills.

8:02 AM

Down Columbia, into *The Grounds*—ordering a flat white to go.

8:16 AM

Into CVS, walking down the bright aisles.

Coming to the front—film, cameras.

Buying gum and water and jerky.

9:01 AM

Into the apartment.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Searching auction sites—“film cameras,” “old cameras.”

Buying cameras.

9:37 AM

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 9:37 AM

“Money,” says Cyborg. He’s right.

I just bought 100 cameras for 150 dollars using an auction website. Old cameras, yes, but cheap as dirt. The film will actually end up costing me more than the cameras (I couldn’t really find film that was cheaper than CVS).

- 1) They’re old, some of them even beat-up looking—so people won’t want to steal them.
- 2) They’re cheap—so they’re easily replaceable.
- 3) They’re small, and each person can have their own.

Tuesday, November 24th

Clear, 43°

9:02 AM

Coming up Maryland, across and onto I Street—Langston.

Climbing up the metal stairs.

Knocking Kyin.

Lynn answering the door—“Already?” she says.

Nodding Kyin.

Following Lynn into her apartment.

Kyin resting a bag on the floor.

Lynn bending down. “Now—what’s in here?” she asks.

Opening the bag.

A pile of cameras.

“Cameras?” asks Lynn—looking up at Kyin.

Kyin sitting on her haunches—opening her carrying bag.

“And film,” she says.

9:58 AM

Kyin and Lynn sitting loading the machines with film—snapping them shut.

Kyin shooting Lynn.

Lynn looking up.

“These are pretty old,” says Kyin, “So we should test each one.”

Nodding Lynn—shooting Kyin.

11:31 AM

Packing Kyin.

“You can decide,” she says, “who to give them to—who to trust.”

Nodding Lynn.

“The main thing,” says Kyin, standing, “is to take pictures—of the cops, gang members—and people who are out of place—strangers.”

Nodding Lynn.

“And make sure they know you’re taking the picture—make it known.”

Nodding Lynn. “I get it,” she says.

Kyin standing at the door, slipping on her jacket, her bag.

“So,” she says, “I’m leaving it to you.”

Nodding Lynn.

Nodding Kyin. “Ok,” she says.

Turning to the door—turning back.

“I’m working on a plan for money,” she says.

“Ok,” says Lynn.

1:10 PM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Ordering cameras, film, batteries.

Placing a call.

Cell, 1:23 PM

Kerry: Hello?

Kyin: Kerry—this is Helen.

Kerry: Helen—do you have any news?

Kyin: Something. I think the woman we're looking for is African—from a French colony. She speaks French. That's all I have right now.

Kerry: African? Oh. Alright, that makes sense. But you don't know where she lives?

Kyin: No, nothing else yet. Kerry, I need to ask you for some money.

Kerry: Oh, of course! I'm sorry I didn't—I guess my mind wasn't with it. Alright, how much should—would, say, three grand be alright? You've been working so hard for me, Helen.

Kyin: That would be great. And I'll call you in a week or so, whether I have anything or not.

Kerry: Alright, thank you so much.

Kyin: Ok—goodbye.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 1:30 PM

From: Swampman

Beingbecoming,

I gotta admit, I'm intrigued.

Feedback.

Act—think—then act again. We live in a community, so our actions affect and are affected by everyone around us.

I'd be interested to know what you're doing exactly—specifically.

Cheers,

Swampy

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Pacing looking through the window.

Saturday, November 28th

Cloudy, 36°

7:02 AM

The sound of keys jangling—a door slamming.

“What?” says sitting Kyin.

“Oh,” she says.

Dozing

7:17 AM

Again the sound of keys jangling—the sound of something being dragged—a door slamming.

“Damn,” says Kyin.

Standing Kyin to the kitchen making coffee.

Clicks on the news.

News, 7:22 AM

Female Anchor: Recapping our top story today: a Syrian woman attempted to detonate a bomb while aboard a commercial airliner flying to Los Angeles. The woman, whose name has not yet been released, was carrying a bomb inside her uterus. Posing as a pregnant woman on board Allele Airlines, the alleged terrorist tried to detonate a semtex bomb when something went wrong. We will update you with more information as the night goes on.

Male Anchor: Frightening stuff. Up next, Metro is considering raising fares. Our street team asks you if you’re willing to pay.

Cracking an egg
into a pan.

Bread into the
toaster.

Sliding the egg onto
the toast.

Coffee into a mug.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Carrying the plate, the mug to the couch.

8:02 AM

Keys jangling—standing Kyin quick to the door, opening and leaning out.

Cate in the hall, bending her head over the keys.

“Hey,” says Kyin.

Cate turning lifting her head. “Oh—hi,” she says softly.

“You’re back?”

Nodding Cate whispering. “Just,” she says. “Did I wake you?”

"No," says Kyin.

Cate looking at the floor. "Ok," she says. "Good."

"You wanna hang out later?"

Cate looking up nodding. "Yes," she says, she smiles.

Glassy eyes.

Nodding Kyin.

Closing the door—returning to the couch.

Laying looking at the painting.

Circles rotating and overlapping.

9:11 AM

Sitting placing a call.

Cell, 9:11 AM

Lynn: Helen?

Kyin: Yes—hey, so, from now on can you call me Energy?

Lynn: Energy?

Kyin: Yes—for our project. And I want you to think of a name for yourself.

Lynn: Ok. I don't—

Kyin: No, I'm not calling because of that—I'm calling because I was sitting here thinking—you know that little road, up Maryland—it's like an alley—near Hechinger?

Lynn: Yeah, of course. What about it?

Kyin: Near the end, there's this long brick building. Do you know it?

Lynn: Yeah, I know a few people who live there. I was thinking on giving one of them a camera.

Kyin: Yes, perfect. Ok, so—I can't remember when, maybe a few weeks ago, I followed a cop down that road, and he went in there for a few hours—do you know anything about that—about why he would do that?

Lynn: No—but I don't know that place that well. I'll—when I give her the camera, I'll get her to look into it—if she doesn't already know something about it. Most people know everything about everyone else in buildings like that. Especially if there's a cop going in there.

Kyin: Ok, good. I've got some money on the way, so I'll be over sometime next week. I'll see you then.

Lynn: Alright. Peace.

Kyin: Peace.

Carrying the
computer to
the couch.

Clicks open—
*Cameras—
Neighborhoods
—Trinidad.*
Clicks open—
*Cameras—
Neighborhoods
—Barry Farm.*
Clicks open—
*Cameras—
Houses—Cate.*

11:10 AM

Knocking Kyin.

Cate opening the door. "Hi," she says, holding the door open. "Did you want to go out or come in?"

"Let's take a walk," says Kyin.

"Ok," says Cate—turning to grab a coat, a bag, keys.

Down and up to Connecticut—walking toward Dupont.

The wind knocking the leaves onto the sidewalk. Branches swaying side to side—bobbing up and down.

Honking taxis.

Tour buses.

"So," says Kyin, "what did you do down there?"

Cate looking—then looking down.

"OWL," she says.

Nodding Kyin.

Cate exhaling.

"Ok, I—what I do is called cryptography or cryptology. But, really, I just call it coding or programming. It's not coding or programming computers—although that does happen—it's more just coding or programming life—language."

Looking at Kyin.

"When I was in school," says Cate, "I was into linguistics and computers—and also, a little bit, biology. I was a geek.

"So—I went on and—and now what I basically do is combine all of those. I decipher and make language codes—and codes about our bodies—about who we are. Identification."

Coming into *The Grounds*.

Ordering each—coffee black, darjeeling.

Cate looking around the coffee shop.

They pick up the cups—and exit.

Heading up Massachusetts.

"For instance—" Cate sipping, looking at Kyin.

"Ok—for instance," says Cate, "Sometimes, I work with this guy from US-VISIT—that's this program for identifying people coming into the US. But, what's interesting about it is that

they identify people by using a body part—say, a fingerprint or an eye scan—I’m sure you’ve seen that stuff on television.”

Nodding Kyin.

“Right,” says Cate, “Well, it’s not quite like that, but—well, probably, sometimes, working with these guys—US-VISIT—you get the feeling that the higher-ups there watch those television shows and use them as models, trying to make them come true.

“But this particular guy I work with—Nolan—he’s obsessed—he’s good at his job—he wants everyone in the whole country to be put into this giant database—so we would have fingerprints of everyone, eye scans, voice scans, blood scans, DNA scans—everything, you name it.”

Coming through Sheridan Circle.

“It’s hard to summarize all this.

“We already have these huge warehouses that store these databases—and we’re building more of them all over the country—Texas, Utah.

“I work with computer programmers and biologists and linguists—that’s the main people I work with. Most people, when they think of our agency—they think it’s just a bunch of computer nerds hacking away. But we have scientists from every field.

“For example, we have biologists who collect Dried Blood Spots from hospitals, the ones they take from newborns, and they enter those DBS records into our database.

“It’s almost as if we’re trying to find a code for everything—the code to end all codes. For computers, for language, for our biology. DNA and morphemes and data bits.”

Cate looking over at sipping Kyin.

“When I’m in West Virginia,” says Cate, “I work mostly with this other guy—a sound engineer. So, with him, I’m working on this way to use voice recognition to—ok, I should back up.”

Shaking Cate sipping tea.

The two crossing Buffalo Bridge—Q Street—big bronze buffalos standing gazing.

The bridge curving above Rock Creek Park.

They stand and watch the cars down below.

“The NSA—observe, watch, listen—OWL. I mostly do the listening. Listening is mostly done in Sugar Grove and Yakima. Sugar Grove’s in the mountains—so that we can listen to everything—cell phones, radios—whatever.

“So I go down there, and we’ve been setting up this system where—so, in the past, and even now, real-life people did the listening. It’s these Navy personnel—they actually sit there with headphones and listen. But that’s stupid, right? It’s too time consuming—labor intensive—and boring. I mean—it’s probably interesting at first, but after a while. “So what we’re doing is getting computers to do the listening. Now, of course, it only works if we already have a recording of the bad guy, right?”

Continuing on into Georgetown.

“But lucky for us,” says Cate, “most terrorists love to talk.”

Brick sidewalks covered in leaves auburn and brown.

Pulling the jackets tight.

“Is that all you did down there?” Kyin asks. “Didn’t you go somewhere else?”

Nodding Cate. “Yes,” she says, “I also met with the FBI—which was pretty pointless, just sort of telling them what I do—conferring—then I went to this conference—it’s basically just people from the NSA and FBI and DHS all getting together and talking about biometrics and what we do and what we think we can do within the coming year and— ‘Oh, you’re doing that? That’s interesting.’

“But we don’t really tell each other anything. It’s all sort of superficial—we tell each other the stuff we already know that they know about us, but we never tell them anything of importance.

“Because it’s a kind of competition, right? I mean—DHS has NCSC—National CyberSecurity Center—which directly competes with us—with the NSA.

“So, for example, the FBI has always been focused on fingerprints—they’re sort of the fingerprint experts—but, now, they’re getting into other things—voice, iris scanning, all that. Their big thing right now is they’re trying to get computers to be able to recognize people’s distinctive ways of walking and to recognize people by their distinctive vein patterns.”

“Vein patterns?”

Nodding Cate. “Yes—vascular,” she says, “And the NSA—we’re really obsessed with voice recognition and linguistic—speech—patterns.”

They continue down the hill.

Brick sidewalks down to M Street.

“So,” says Kyin. “You—the NSA, the FBI—you sit and listen to—to the whole country?”

“Not the FBI—they don’t really listen—well, they do, but it’s different. They may listen to a particular group of people they’re investigating. But we—the NSA—we listen, yes, we can listen to everyone. We’re the best at it, really.”

The two walking down Wisconsin.

“But,” says Cate, “we don’t listen to everyone—we only listen to criminals.

“People think of the NSA as this ominous thing, and they worry about privacy—I know that.

“But, really, I think of us as safeguarding privacy. We are sort of the essence of privacy. We’re the most private organization in the world, because *we are privacy*. How could anyone ever be private without us? We define what it means to be private.”

Silent Kyin.

“The NSA,” says Cate, “we’re really the privacy-backbone of our culture. Without us, privacy wouldn’t exist.”

Monday, November 30th

Clear, 33°

5:49 AM

Keys jangling—door slamming.

“What?”

Kyin popping up from the couch.

“Oh,” she says.

Standing looking through the window—down.

Cate coming out, crossing the street—tossing a brown bag into the trash. Turning walking entering a car—driving up to Connecticut.

Dressing Kyin grabbing keys—down and out to the trash.

Grabbing the bag brown, sliding it under her coat.

5:58 AM

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—coming out into the cold.

Standing next to Kyin—handing and lighting her cigarette, his own.

The two standing smoking.

6:11 AM

Coming into the apartment.

Pulling out the brown bag—the brown envelope—the folder. Writing the date on the folder. Then opening the folder, flipping through the pages.

“The code to end all codes,” says Kyin.

Shaking her head.

Then carrying the folder to the bookcase—sliding it into the row.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the news.

To the kitchen making coffee, breakfast.

6:59 AM

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:04 AM

From: Mom

Kyin,

I’m thinking about Ian. Why is it taking so long for the police to find out anything? They don’t know anything! I don’t know why they wanted me to give them my blood, what good did that do?

Kyin, do you think he is gone forever?

You should come up and visit.

Mom

Email Outbox, 6:07 AM

To: Mom

Mom,

I don’t know. Sometimes I think they’ll never find him, sometimes I think he’ll show up tomorrow. Who knows?

I’ll come visit some day.

Kyin

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 6:11 AM

Cate is home. We talked quite a bit these past couple days. Actually, she did most of the talking—I listened. It's usually Cate talking mostly when she's drunk. But she must've been thinking this over for a while, because she came back ready to talk, to tell me everything.

She's certainly a dyed-in-the-wool NSA worker. The exception to that being, of course, the fact that she has told me so much.

Cryptology/Cryptography.

Codes—encoding life.

So we have two ends of the scale. BB is one end—those people who believe that everything government-affiliated is “Big Brother”. CB is the other end—Crime Busters, those who believe that everything the government does is helping against the bad guys. BB= “The government is watching us!” CB= “The government is protecting us!”

BB-----CB. (Paranoia-----Gullibility) (Liberty-----Security)

What is “justified caution”?

I would say that most reasonable people lie somewhere between these two endpoints. If someone steals my bankcard, then they need my PIN. My PIN, as far as the bank is concerned, is my identity. Biometrics is a way of tying our identity to a body part. I am= my fingerprint (fingerprints), my iris (iris scanners), my face (facial recognition), my voice (voice recognition). In films, the character offers up a body part to be scanned and a voice says, “Identity confirmed.”

PIN=identity for banks. Biometric body part=identity for State. Our body part gives us access to citizenship. So, a biometric database defines not only criminals (explicitly), but also citizens (implicitly).

Cate kept talking about privacy, about how important it is—and in the same breath she was talking about how best to listen to everyone, how most efficiently to monitor everyone's communications.

She talked for some time. Biometrics, cryptology voice/iris/vein recognition.

“We are privacy.”

How to protect identity. How to protect citizens. How to tie people's identities to their citizenship.

I ended, eventually, not really listening to what she was saying.

She manages to make me both bored and angry at the same time.

I'm really getting sick of this woman.

Looking over the streets of Trinidad and Barry Farm.

12:04 PM

Coming up Maryland—I Street.

Langston.

Climbing the metal stairs—Lynn coming out onto the landing.

“I saw you coming,” she says smiling.

“Thanks,” says Kyin.

Coming in from the cold.

“It’s really quiet out there,” says Kyin.

“The cold,” says nodding Lynn.

The two sitting drinking coffee.

“You see,” says Lynn, “coming here this time of year—what it’s like. Then, when summer comes, you’ll see how it is. We’ll get some pictures now inside—that’s where they hang. Then we’ll get more outside once the rain passes.”

Nodding sipping Kyin.

“Once it’s hot,” says Lynn, “That’s when things start to heat up.”

Smiling Kyin. “So, maybe,” she says, “the answer to all the violence is just to buy everyone air conditioners. Bring more ice cream trucks through here. A waterpark. Cool everyone down.”

Smiling Lynn—sipping.

12:49 PM

The two leaning over the kitchen table—looking at cameras, papers.

“What’s this?” asks Kyin.

“This is—I’ve given out a few,” says Lynn, “I’m keeping track. Once they start using film, I’ll keep track of it—giving them one roll at a time.”

Nodding Kyin.

“I was thinking,” she says, “That probably a big part of the first batch will be holiday pictures—Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years.”

“Yeah,” says Lynn—standing moving through the kitchen.

“But I don’t mind that,” says Kyin, turning, “because it’ll let us see who is a part of what groups—families, friends. Who fits in and who is a stranger. It’ll sort of us give us a backdrop—so later on we can see who’s who. Who knows each other. Once we get

going, then, we—I'll start setting this up in Barry Farm and Park Morton. Then, later—other communities. I mean—hopefully, we'll see. I may need your help with that, too.”
Lynn looking through the refrigerator.

“I'm thinking, too,” says Kyin, “Of maybe eventually getting the homeless involved in this. I mean—they're not just this huge population, but they're also everywhere, and—I mean, no one sees them, they're invisible. So they can just do what they want—they could take a picture standing right in someone's face and they wouldn't even be noticed.”

Nodding Lynn. “Good idea,” she says.

“Oh—right,” says Kyin—walking into the living room.

Into her bag—pulling out money.

Walking back into the kitchen.

“We need,” she says—putting the money on the table, “a permanent reliable income feed. Some way to bring in money. But for now we'll just have to make do with these bits and pieces.”

Lynn looking at the money. “What's that?” she asks.

“It's—a little over a grand.”

Lynn walking to the money, looking. “What?” she asks—touching the bills, looking at Kyin.

“Just like that?”

Nodding Kyin shrugging. “Sure,” she says.

“But we need more,” she says, “So—I do have one plan.”

Lynn standing looking.

The two walking into the living room—sitting.

Kyin holding the money. “I want to use this money against them,” she says. “I want to poison them, to—I was thinking—we can buy their stuff, right?”

“Buy—what?”

“We can buy from them and photograph them selling—so we have pictures of them selling.”

“Buy—stuff. Caps? Who's buying it?”

“Well—we'll have to—we'll have to think about that, you're right. But the main thing is to photograph them selling it—with us, our back to the camera. To trap them—photograph them in the act.”

Lynn sitting into her chair, the cushion.

"It sounds—I don't know," she says.

"Some of these women," she says, "you can't put them around the pipe. They had their fill of it—they already had too much. Zombies. So if they around it, buying it, selling it—it's too much."

Lynn leaning forward.

"Energy," she says, "These boys—they don't fuck around, ok? They'll kill someone for—for looking at them the wrong way. Especially if there's a group of them."

Nodding Kyin—leaning forward.

"The way to gas these fuckers," she says, "all of them—the cops, the gangs—is to play dumb. Just play like dumb women. Hopeless women sobbing over their dead boys. Hopeless zombies itching for a hit. That's what they expect you to do, right? So do it. Then fuck em over."

Friday, December 4th

Clear, 31°

5:59 AM

Standing smoking.

"What kind of work do you do?" asks Kyin.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—puffing out into the cold.

"Databases," he says.

Nodding Kyin.

"You?" he asks.

"A reporter," says Kyin.

Mr. Dixon raising his forehead.

6:16 AM

Coming into the apartment, pulling the brown bag from under her coat.

To the kitchen—making coffee.

To the coffee table, pulling out the envelope, the folder—writing the date.

Clicks on the news.

To the kitchen, drinking orange juice.

Cracking an egg into a pan.

Bread into the toaster—toast.

Sliding the egg on the toast.

News, 6:21 AM

Female Anchor: News again from Iran that the regime there is cracking down on the privacy rights of its citizens. 'The government is now requiring citizens to report any suspicious activity of friends or neighbors. Reported individuals names' are stored in a government database.

Male Anchor: Frightening stuff. Also in the news, an earthquake in Indonesia with thousands feared dead. We'll keep you updated.

Female Anchor: That's a tragedy. Stay tuned for local sports and our five-day forecast.

Carrying the mug, the plate to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

7:01 AM

Carrying the computer

to the couch.

Clicking open *Cameras—Neighborhoods—Trinidad*.

Clicking open *Cameras—Neighborhoods—Barry Farm*

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 7:05 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

Things are in motion. Did you know that I was serious about needing a cause? I was. Now I have one.

I've found some friends. Nodes.

I agree with all of your statements. I like the concept of "jargon smashing," but would like to hear more about it.

A virus.

Fine, then. We have begun spreading. I suppose, to carry the metaphor, we are the cancer stem cells—propagating, resistant to attack.

A few friends, as I've said—their names and areas are:

"Memex"—degree in computer engineering

"Oak"—runs a store (provides income)

"Sand"—nuclear physicist (Livermore) —he has some friends he might bring in

That's it, as of yet, but I know I'll be able to bring in big numbers quickly. People over here are ready for a cause.

Email Inbox, 7:07 AM

I went down to Yakima—I could see the NSA from the highway, but only the edge of it. It's actually just above Yakima, right off 82. The place is huge, and it's all on Army land—the Yakima Firing Center—so there's no way of getting to it. So, actually, what you see from the highway is just the little Army entrance. From what I can tell, the NSA listening station is in the middle of this Army training facility. So, yeah, good luck with anyone trying to get past Army personnel to the NSA.

You can kinda see the NSA from the highway—the satellites—but not that well.

Beginning plans to follow NSA employees after they exit work.

More later.

Darger

Email Outbox, 7:19 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

Good news, all. Use the nodes to build. Technology is the base—computers (email, blogs, etc), photography.

Take pictures of the law—cops, criminals.

Always document—record, photograph, email, etc.

Don't forget—always modify, always re-examine previous protocols.

SMASH JARGONS.

If you don't know yet exactly what I mean by “jargon smashing,” over time you will see. I will use more and more examples—refine—re-examine.

Jargonizing is first and foremost speaking for other people—erasing their words, “representing” them.

People can fucking speak for themselves—they don't need someone to “summarize” or “represent” or “analyze” their words or beliefs or desires.

One of the main problems with our government is that a select few “speak for” the many.

We need to allow each person to be able to speak for themselves. No more “voting” and “elections” putting people into office so that “interest groups” can give them money to vote a certain way. We need each person to vote for each decision. No more Republic.

We need direct action. Direct democracy.

Jargonizing is encoding life.

Jargonizing is categorizing.

Jargonizing is taking the many and making it one.

Jargonizing simplifies complexity.

Email Outbox, 7:22 AM

Jargonizing erases.

Jargonizing orders chaos.

Jargonizing is labeling.

SMASH JARGONS

Darger—you need to modify my statements.

HEURISITCALLY MODIFY AND REBUILD—RATCHET.

Darger—come up with examples of jargonizing (if you need help, the easiest place to find jargons is politics).

SMASH JARGONS.

Energy

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Places a call.

Cell, 7:30 AM

Lynn: Hello?

Kyin: Ocean—hey, this is Energy.

Lynn: Hey. Some of them don't like it, but I'll get through, you know how they are. Remember Tasha? Women like her—young.

Kyin: What is it, exactly?

Lynn: Nothing. Just—the kids, they don't trust anybody that don't live here. Even then they don't trust most. So—I mean, you'd better not come in here for a while. Or come and leave where no one else will see. They see you coming in my place, then you know how it is.

Kyin: Alright.

Lynn: Especially when it's cold, when they all—you see someone here don't belong, then—you stick out. So, you know.

Kyin: I get it. This is the crucial part, you know? I mean, Ocean, I mean I just wish I had someone like you in every neighborhood. I'm starting this up in Quarles next.

Lynn: Quarles?

Kyin: Yeah—you know, Douglas, that area. Kenilworth. Across the river from you. I mean—if you look at the map, this area, Carver Langston and Quarles, they're sort of the backbone of Northeast. The Benning Road borderlines. So—if we can get a solid foundation there, then we can work back. So the next two will be Barry Farm and Park Morton.

Cell, 7:33 AM

Lynn: Well, I'd like to see it all mapped out. But, I gotta be honest, Energy, I dunno about Park Morton. That place a desert. And Barry Farms is bad too.

Kyin: Yeah—the thing about it is, I mean, the government and big business are already planning on bulldozing Park Morton and Barry Farm. So, I mean. I dunno. But I have one guy in mind up there, I think he's the kind of person that will be interested in what we're doing. Barry Farm—I dunno. I mean—yeah, Ocean, you know more about it than I do—I just get the feeling that it's generally the middle-aged men and women that will be more open to this.

Lynn: Alright, so remember that building you were asking me about—down Hechinger Mall?

Kyin: Oh, yeah—did you find out anything?

Lynn: Alright, there's—we have a node there—her name's—just call her “River,” right? But—she's lived in there a long time, and she says that that's where they all play numbers, craps.

Kyin: Gambling? Who?

Lynn: All them all—cops, dealers—the all go in there, throw down a few. It's not like they all stand around, nothing like that—I mean, sometimes—but mostly it's just a, you know—a bookie, a place to go and place bets and sit around and drink.

Kyin: Wait—what? That long brick building down Hechinger?

Lynn: Yeah, you know the one.

Kyin: Ok, so—explain this to me again. Cops gamble in there?

Lynn: That's—this is according to River, ok? But, anyway, she's good. She knows it.

Kyin: Oh—yes. Oh, this is good—this is good news. This—does River—you gave her a camera?

Lynn: River?—yep. Extra film.

Kyin: Ok, so—oh, I wish I could go in there. Well, what we might have to do is buy her a small camera, something she can hide. And we need someone else in there two—at least two nodes in that building. But, you know—get them taking pictures—of everyone—cops, dealers—everyone.

Lynn: Alright.

Kyin: Everyone—oh, this could be a goldmine, Lynn. I mean, if that's really what it is—them gambling. I mean—can you imagine—us having photographs of DC cops gambling? With dealers—gang members? Oh—ok, we'll just have to wait it out. Give her plenty of film. I'll bring some more along—no, I mean. You and I, we're gonna have to find a place—actually, you know what? Ocean, you can just come here, you know?

Cell, 7:37 AM

Lynn: Where's that?

Kyin: Adams Morgan—just—alright, we'll set up something. I'm getting more money. We can start selling here, too—these college kids come here, to AdMo—we'll sell them, take pictures, make money—ok, I'm thinking this through.

Lynn: Come up today?

Kyin: Ok—I've got an idea—I'm going to Quarles today, so let's meet at—at the big intersection there—what—you know—Benning and Florida and all that—that intersection. And, I'll give you my address and film and all that—you have, do you have any caps yet?

Lynn: Caps? Yeah, some—just a little.

Kyin: Ok—and, so—let me think. My mind is racing. Actually, no, what I'll do is go to Quarles first—talk to people—I know one girl there, she seems open to me. And then, after that I'll meet you at the intersection—let's say around 3, ok?

Lynn: 3—alright. And you want me to bring some caps.

Kyin: Yes. And I'll start selling it here, maybe some in Columbia Heights. I've also been trying to talk to the homeless crowd around here—they're, most of the guys I've talked to—they're all men so far—they're talkative guys. They like standing around talking—but they won't say where they live, just, they just say something like, "Oh, I take the bus here, I live downtown." But that's all I get.

Kyin: I mean, I'll keep working on them, see where I get. I mean, they love talking so much, so I know I'll get something out of em.

Lynn: Energy—you don't want to be giving any of them caps, ok? Because they'll just—they'll lose you money, ok? Those—especially those street, they—just be careful about trusting them with anything like that, ok? That's street zombies.

Kyin: Yeah—ok. Yeah, I mean, I know what you mean. I can—sometimes, if I don't watch myself, I can romanticize homeless people. I need to watch that—my tendency to do that. Thanks. Ok—so, I'll see at 3, right?

Lynn: Yep—3 at Maryland and Bladensburg.

Kyin: Ok, peace.

Dressing, packing her bag.

Down and up to Connecticut.

10:32 AM

Sitting talking with Malika.

"I don't know," says Malika. "People here are too—tired."

Nodding Kyin.

"It's a slow process," she says. "Sometimes you have to just slowly convince people that things can be different."

Quiet Malika sitting staring at Kyin.

"This isn't—you won't be alone," says Kyin. "We're already building in Carver and Langston—across the river. We've got, already we've got thirty nodes over there. Thirty, ok? Each one of them invisible—just taking pictures."

"Nodes?"

Nodding Kyin. "That's just what we call people who are with us."

"Malika," she says, "this is—it's not—it's about smashing those who've taken away your power. The police and the dealers—I mean, when your cousin was shot, what did they police do?"

Shrugging Malika.

"They didn't do anything, right?" say Kyin. "And it's not because they're evil or anything. It's just that they're part of an environment that thinks that if you live here, if you live in this neighborhood, then it's ok for you to die—it's ok for you to be shot for no reason."

Malika nodding slowly.

"That's true," she says.

"Think about it," says Kyin. "Can you imagine if someone in Georgetown or Chevy Chase was shot by a car driving through? Holy hell, there'd be rioting in the streets! Rich people would call up Congress, the news, the DC Council, the Mayor! It'd be everywhere!"

"But what happens—what happened here?"

"Nothing."

"Because," says Kyin, "It's ok for poor people, for disadvantaged people to die. It's ok for them to be run over, victims of a neverending turf battle between dealers and cops."

Nodding Malika.

Looking up at Kyin.

Kyin pulling from her pocket money—putting it on the table.

"Here," she says. "This is to help you get started."

Malika touching the money. "How much is it?" she asks.

"Three hundred dollars," says Kyin.

Malika shaking her head.

"Crazy," she says.

“Just start,” says Kyin. “Start taking pictures. Start giving these cameras to others—nodes.”

“Here,” says Kyin, “reaching into her bag, grabbing a notepad, a pen, “you can write down the names of people you give the cameras to. You don’t have to, though. The main thing is to get the film back once they’ve finished. Then give them another roll.”

Malika holding the money.

“For the government and the BIDs, that amount of money isn’t enough to piss,” says Kyin.

“They use that much money just to buy lunch.

“But for us, it’s enough.

“All we need to do is begin the infection—to implant the virus.”

2:50 PM

Coming up Benning Road to Maryland, Florida, Bladensburg.

Across the intersection, Lynn is standing smiling.

Kyin coming across. “You’re early,” she says, she smiles.

“You, too,” says Lynn.

Nodding Kyin. “Yeah,” she says. “actually, I could’ve come even earlier—I finished up pretty quickly over there.”

“How’d it go?”

“Good,” says Kyin. “I’ve got a node—her name’s—she doesn’t have a name yet. But she’s—I can tell she’ll do it. She’ll be our gateway across the river.”

Smiling Lynn. “Good,” she says.

“Yeah,” says Kyin. “Can we—is there somewhere we can go?”

Lynn nodding—turning up Bladensburg.

The two walk up the road.

Coming to a CVS.

“Here’s our pharmacy,” says Lynn—grinning.

The two walking behind the building.

Lynn handing Kyin a brown envelope.

Kyin putting the envelope into her bag.

5:40 PM

Coming into the apartment.

Placing the bag on the table.

To the kitchen for water cold.

To the coffee table, pulling the envelope from her bag.

6:29 PM

Knocking—Kyin walking opening the door.

Cate standing smiling. “Hi,” she says.

“Hey,” says Kyin.

Cate tilting her head. “You want to go out?”

“Sure,” says Kyin, “Let me grab a coat.”

Turning into her apartment—sliding into her coat, her bag strap.

Closing the door behind.

7:28 PM

Sitting on 18th—eating fries, falafel sandwiches.

College-age women, men walking along the narrow sidewalk covered in gum and grime.

Cold air crisp against the cheekbones.

“I don’t understand,” says Kyin, “how you decide who to listen to and who not to listen to.”

Cate eating nodding.

“That’s the whole thing,” she says. “We don’t decide—we, the whole point of my work, of what I do every day, day in and out—of why I go to these conferences, of why I spend all that time in West Virginia, in the middle of nowhere on the backside of some mountain, is to teach computers how to decide.

“So we—humans,” says Cate, “*don’t* do any of the deciding. I mean—the decision process is in the coding itself—the program.”

A breeze blowing into their faces—the two covering their skin.

Then lowering their arms as the wind dies down.

Drinking Kyin—a bottle of beer brown-bottled.

“Ok,” says Cate, “Imagine that you have—that you want to devise a way of detecting your enemy—right, you don’t have an enemy, but say you do. Say you have someone that has been out to get you—whatever that may mean—out to steal your identity, or maybe just, who knows, stalking you or something—following you—watching you.

“So you have—there are three choices—primarily: you can, number one, you can just ignore them and hope they’ll go away. And that may work for a while—but if what they’re doing hurts you, then ignoring them will only make it worse. If they’re using your

identity to steal money from you, ignoring them would be pretty stupid. They'll just keep stealing your money.

"Ok, so that's number one."

Cate eating—watching a young couple squeeze between a tree and the restaurant's terrace.

"Number two—your second option," she says, "is to lure them in—to trap them. So you—first, you have to find some kind of bait. Something they want—something that you, that either you have or that you can pretend to have. A honeypot. That's number two.

"Three," says Cate—covering her face from the wind, "is to somehow find them, to track them down."

Lowering her arm. "Now," she says, "that's the most difficult and time-consuming of the three options. You have to—really, you're playing detective.

"I mean—ignoring someone, that's easy. And putting out bait—it can be time-consuming, but, I mean, you can just set out as many traps as you like—and, you know, all you have to do is wait. But tracking someone—finding them—that's something else entirely. To do that, really, you have to get inside their mind—you have to figure out what it is they want—how they think."

The two eating—finishing.

"Let's go inside," says Kyin.

Nodding Cate.

The two walking up 18th—into *The Grounds*.

Ordering a flat white, a tea.

Finding a couch—sitting.

Music, voices—chatter.

"What we do," says Cate. "Ok—it's the NSA—National Security Agency—so, it's *agents* that keep the *nation secure*. So the people we're after, our enemies—and, yes, we do have enemies—just look at the falling towers if you don't think we have enemies—we use all three methods: sometimes, if we think they're not a real threat, we'll ignore them; sometimes we'll use bait, and sometimes we'll track them down.

"All of this—pretty much, yes, all of it—is technologically mediated. We don't do groundwork at the NSA. HUMINT. That's the FBI, the CIA. So the bait, the tracking—it's all either electronics or fiber optics or—it's phones and computers, right?

“Airwaves or soundwaves or lightwaves. Programs. Codes.”

Cate sitting back into the couch, sipping tea.

Staring into the liquid, the room.

A crowded room—music mixing with voices.

Leaning Kyin—pointing to her ear.

Nodding Cate.

The two exiting—out onto the sidewalk.

The quiet street.

“I’m sorry,” says Cate. “I forgot.”

Nodding Kyin. “I forget about it too,” she says, “most of the time.”

“Let’s just go over to the park,” she says.

The two walking down Columbia.

The two coming to a bench—sitting sipping.

Cate crossing legs. “We do deal with hackers,” she says, “cyberterrorists—but not as much as one might think. Anyway, that’s not my area—I don’t know too much about it.

“We had to devise a way—first, we had to devise a way to listen to the enemy, to hear what they were saying.

“So that’s—I mean, first off, back then,” sipping, lowering her chin, “most all of—the CIA and the NSA and the DHS—we’re all sort of these agencies that were created out of wars.

“The CIA—that was, it arose out of World War Two—the Dulles brothers—first, just sort of training foreign soldiers and things like that—luring away German scientists.

“The DHS—sure, we all know, arose out of 9/11.

“And the NSA, really, I would trace us to the Korean War. It was really that war that provided justification for further funding cryptanalysis and signals intelligence and—and it was also that war, suddenly we were fighting against people speaking Korean and Mandarin—and it’s all in one war, one tiny little geographical area. So—right there, that war provided the foundation for the NSA: linguistics, cryptology, and OWL.”

Cate sipping—looking at sipping Kyin.

Then looking back at the earth, the knobby roots of trees.

“So—ok—right, each of these agencies are defined as being wartime agencies that operate even during times of peace.

“That is—I mean, from the point-of-view of those working in these agencies—the NSA, DHS, and the CIA—we are always at war. For all intents and purposes, peace does not exist.

“That’s the—that’s what anyone trying to understand these agencies needs to know, first and foremost.

“Ok?” asks Cate.

Turning to look at Kyin.

Nodding Kyin.

“So,” says Cate, “because we’re always at war, we’re always engaging the enemy. We’re always tracking them, attacking them, luring them, capturing them—fighting them.

“For the NSA, that means—observe, watch, listen—technologically.”

Cate sipping—clearing her throat.

Sipping Kyin. “Do you wanna go back inside?” she asks.

Nodding Cate.

The two walking down Columbia toward Connecticut.

Cate grabbing holding Kyin’s arm.

9:03 PM

Coming into Cate’s apartment.

The two taking off coats, shoes.

To the kitchen for water cold. Cate filling the pot—placing it on the burner.

To the couch—sitting.

Quiet Kyin.

“I know,” says Cate. “I’m not usually like this—I’m usually quiet—sitting listening.

“It’s my job, really—to listen.

“To teach machines how to listen.

“I don’t know.

“I—Kyin, I don’t know really. I think I’m talking fast, spitting this all out because I care about you—I think that’s what it is.

“So—sitting down there in those cold mountains—I dunno.

“I just, I guess I started getting angry at myself—for never—I mean, how can someone live if they have to keep one part of their life secret? How the hell can you ever truly be close to someone if you’re always hiding something—if you’re always—” looking at Kyin, “it’s lying, really, isn’t? At least, it’s a kind of lying. Omission. Lack of trust.”

Cate pausing looking nodding at the floor.

“So that’s what I’m saying, I guess.

“I trust you.

“I’d rather trust you than live my life never trusting anyone enough to tell them about this. Living only listening to other people—strangers.”

Cate sitting quiet.

Sitting Kyin.

9:59 PM

Cate standing entering the kitchen.

Standing Kyin.

Cate pouring wine white in glasses two.

The two drinking.

“Too serious,” says Cate.

Cate walking to the television—clicking on the screen.

“Let’s watch something,” she says.

The two sitting drinking watching the screen.

12:37 AM

Cate in the bedroom sleeping moaning.

Clicking off the screen—carrying the glasses to the kitchen—washing.

Turning to look at sleeping Cate.

Then standing on the counter—grabbing the camera—bringing it down into her chest.

Stepping off the counter.

Turning to look at sleeping Cate.

Then grabbing her coat, her bag, and exiting the apartment.

Down the hall to her door—sliding in the key, turning the handle.

Opening—closing.

Clicking on the lights.

Throwing off her coat, her bag.

Tossing the camera onto the floor.

Sitting on the couch—looking over the painting.

In the upper left corner: a grid—squares connecting, overlapping—infected by points, connected by lines.

Wednesday, December 9th

Clear, 30°

5:56 AM

Cold air hitting thin against the skin.

Mr. Dixon standing smoking.

Nodding smoking Kyin.

Pulling the coat tight.

A car passing.

6:27 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:27 AM

From: Anisa

Choi,

I have not seen you in 4Humours in a long time. I wonder what you are doing. Last time we talked, you asked me about my government. This is a question Americans want to know about Iran. For me, my main concern is not nuclear power. Here in Iran, we do not talk about that. We talk about nuclear energy. From reading foreign newspapers, I can see that nuclear power bothers other countries. From my point of view, this does not bother me. Does it bother you that your country has nuclear weapons? I am sure you do not think about it too often. It is the same with me.

Nuclear power is something that government leaders yell about, but most citizens do not think about.

I think about my school activities and running, and, hopefully, being able to attend graduate studies abroad. Politics do not concern me, except for false imprisonment.

As far as school, it is going very well. I still run every day.

That is all.

Please write,

Anisa

Email Outbox, 6:35 AM

To: Anisa

Anisa,

I apologize for not writing or visiting 4Humours. My life is a bit crazy now.

I didn't mean to imply anything when I asked about your government. I suppose I asked because I've been thinking a lot recently about my own government and how it's making me angry. I don't know how your own government is, but my government does not treat poor people very well. So, this has been bothering me, and now I'm trying to do something about it—even if what I do does not amount to anything.

Please, Anisa, don't think I was trying to say anything about nuclear power or your government or anything like that. Like you, I think it's a waste of time to worry about those things. It's all just posturing and rhetoric.

Your friend,

Choi

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Dressing—packing her bag.

Down and up to Connecticut.

Down to Florida—grabbing a cab.

7:31 AM

Coming up Quarles, placing a call.

Cell, 7:31 AM

Malika: Hello?

Kyin: Hey, this is Energy. Did I wake you?

A group of young men
walking toward Kyin.

The men slowing—stopping, looking at Kyin approaching.

"Hello," she says. "I'm a reporter," she says.

The men staring.

"Would you like to answer a few questions?"

The men slow-walking passing.

Kyin turning pulling her recorder from her bag—holding it in front.

"Can I ask you a few questions?"

The men turning—backing away.

Smiling Kyin.

“What do you think about the New Communities Initiative?” she asks.

The men staring.

“It’s a plan,” says Kyin, “by the DC government and big business to bulldoze DC public housing and replace it with mixed-income housing.”

The men staring.

A man on the left nodding.

“So you know about it,” says Kyin, turning to him. “Has the government sent any surveys to your houses?”

A man on the right nodding—looking at the recorder.

Nodding Kyin, turning to him. “Do you remember any of the questions?”

The man nodding. “Income?—Size of your household?, How do you feel about mixed-income housing?, Do you trust the DC Government?, Do you trust—Social Community Partners?”

Nodding Kyin asking, “Social Community Partners—who is that?”

The man shrugging.

Kyin pulling a pad from her bag—writing the name.

Social Community Partners ??

Then looking up.

“Ok,” she says. “Does anyone else remember anything?”

The young men standing staring—shaking their heads.

Nodding Kyin.

“Ok,” she says, putting away the notebook, the recorder—looking at the men.

The young men staring.

9:49 AM

Sitting talking with Malika—*Sun*.

“Here,” says Kyin, reaching into her bag—pulling out a roll of cash, “this is five hundred dollars.”

Malika looking at the money—putting it into her pocket.

12:27 PM

Standing talking with Lynn—*Ocean*.

Lynn handing Kyin an envelope.

Kyin handing Lynn a roll of cash.

“That was fast,” she says.

Nodding Kyin.

“Yeah,” she says.

“Those college kids in Adams Morgan—it’s like candy to them.”

Nodding Lynn.

“Oh, yeah,” she says, reaching into her pocket—handing Kyin a roll of film.

“What’s this?”

“That,” says pointing Lynn, “is pictures of cops gambling —with gang members.”

Kyin taking the roll—looking up.

Then smiling hugging Lynn.

3:40 PM

Down the bright aisles.

Grabbing water, pills, jerky.

Coming to the counter—the man in the lab coat.

“Name?” he asks.

“Choi,” she says.

The man handing her an envelope, a CD-ROM—pictures developed.

Paying Kyin.

5:10 PM

Sitting sipping a triple flat white.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 5:10 PM

I’m about to upload a series of pictures of cops gambling with gang members.

The only cop that I recognized is Patrick Walker—so I’ll have to do some research, try and find out the names of the others.

Coming into Quarles, I ran into a group of “young men”. In the press and most of DC, that what the code language is for a group of young Black men.

It’s a DC jargon. It’s an important phrase, because, depending upon who you’re talking to, the phrase can serve as a euphemism: “gang” or “crew.” But, sometimes “young men” just means that—young men. So it’s this dangerously ambiguous phrase—are they part of a gang, or not? When you see it on the DC news, the phrase almost always is code for “gang members”—but the trick is, the newscasters rarely come out and say that. “Young men” is also the code used in the DC Gang Injunction.

Uploading pictures.

Searching—"Social Community Partners," "Social Community Partners Washington, DC," "Social Community Partners Quarles Street," "Social Community Partners BID," "Social Community Partners Redevelopment Project," "Social Community Partners Mixed-income Housing."

Searching reading refining.

Searching—"First Bank of the United States," "First US Bank," "FBUS," "First Bank of the United States and Social Community Partners," "First Bank of the United States BID."

Blog, 6:14 PM

So—ok—yes: "A group of young men."

"Young men standing on the street corner."

"Young men driving by."

"Young men involved in a shooting."

So, these guys, they were sizing me up and I was sizing them up. I asked them a few questions about the New Communities Initiative, and they were noncommittal. They didn't want to leave the conversation first—they were waiting for me to walk away—to back down.

They mentioned the business that is the government's partner in all this—Social Community Partners (SCP). I've looked up their website—it's just this sort of vague, "Happy happy yay business is great, isn't it?" website. They have a list of their projects, including Park Morton, Quarles, Sursum Corda, Truxton, and Barry Farm. A picture of the Mayor shaking the CEOs hand. So, from what I can tell, Social Community Partners is planning on demolishing all of these housing projects and putting up mixed-income housing and BIDs.

Social Community Partners is connected to First United States Bank (FUSB), which is one of those huge banks (I'm sure you've heard of it). Soon, I will detail the history of FUSB—it's pretty interesting.

I met again with Sun—she's coming along. I'm going to try and have Ocean meet with her and give her advice about how to find and nurture nodes. Ocean already has over 50 nodes, and each one is pretty reliable. If we could get Sun anywhere near that number, then we'd have a pretty nice virus going in the far corner of Northeast DC.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Placing a call.

Cell, 6:49 PM

Lynn: Hello?

Kyin: Hey, Ocean, this is Energy. I just uploaded the pictures onto the blog—they're perfect. I recognize one of the cops, but not the others. What I want to do is—is to make sure the node inside that building—what's her name?

Lynn: River.

Kyin: Ok, good. So, go ahead and give her my number, I want her to call me next time these cops come to gamble. Tell her to call me as soon as they arrive—as soon as more than two of them are there.

Lynn: Alright.

Kyin: Ok, good. Are you making out, ok? You need anything?

Lynn: No, everything's fine.

Kyin: Ok, great. The—I've got a pretty solid start on the other side of the Anacostia, but I might ask you to talk the lead node over there—her name's Sun. Can you meet with her sometime this week?

Lynn: Yeah, ok.

Kyin: I just think it would help if you can talk to her—so she can get some advice about how to do things over there. She's having trouble cultivating nodes.

Lynn: Alright—that sounds good. I can do that. How old is she?

Kyin: Oh, she's probably around—early twenties.

Lynn: Alright.

Kyin: Alright, I'll call her to set it up, then call you back sometime this week.

Lynn: Alright.

Kyin: Ok, peace.

Lynn: Peace.

Printing pictures.

Grabbing her notebook—writing a note.

Dear Officer Walker,

Please meet with me at the Lincoln Diner in Gettysburg this Saturday at 8 AM.

Yours,
Energy

Tearing the page from the notebook.

Sliding the photographs, the page, into an envelope.

Addressing, then stamping, the envelope.

Patrick Walker
71632 Old Water Road, Germantown, MD

Dressing, packing her bag.

Down and up to Columbia—across Belmont to 18th Street.

The ringing phone.

Cell, 7:09 PM

Kyin: Hello?

Fiel: Hey, let's go out tonight—I haven't seen you in ages.

Kyin: Yeah, I know, sorry. I've been busy.

Fiel: Busy with what—you don't even have a job? Sorry—forget I said that. Let's go out, ok?

Kyin: Ok—Crime? 20 Minutes?

Fiel: Deal—and I'm sorry about the job thing, forget I said it.

Kyin: No big. Peace.

Down to the Post
Office—pushing the
envelope into the
metal slot.

7:32 PM

Coming into *Crime*.

Fiel, Tisha sitting in the back—waving.

Sitting Kyin.

The waiter coming—the three ordering.

"I haven't seen you in forever," says Tisha.

"Neither have I," says Fiel.

Quiet Kyin.

"You look different," says Fiel.

Nodding Tisha. "Yeah," she says.

Nodding Kyin—sipping.

"Can you hear alright?" asks Fiel.

Nodding Kyin.

"Sure," she says.

The clamoring crowd leaning over the bar—holding out bills.

Friday, December 11th

Light rain, 35°

6:04 AM

Standing smoking.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—exhaling.

“No—to be honest,” he says, “I’m still fairly ignorant when it comes to that kind of thing—blogs and whatnot.”

Nodding Kyin.

“Yeah,” she says, “it’s still a difficult way to make a living—but, you know, as far as control, the final say—it’s all up to me. I don’t have an editor standing over me, a corporation telling what is or is not appropriate, telling me what I can’t say because it may offend one of their advertisers or special interest groups.”

Inhaling—exhaling.

“Sure,” he says, “money—it’s always there, guiding everything.”

Turning to look down at Kyin—“Anyone who tells you otherwise is either ignorant or being disingenuous.”

6:33 AM

Coming into the apartment.

Labeling the file—sliding it into the bookcase.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:35 AM

Male Anchor: Also in the news, a shooting last night in Southeast. Dana has the story.

Female reporter: That’s right, Jason. I’m standing here on Minnesota Avenue, not too far from the Metro station. Last night, a group of teenagers were coming home from school, walking in the cold weather, when a car drove by, firing several rounds into the crowd. Two boys were taken to the hospital for wounds, and a teenage girl was fatally wounded. [cut to a young man standing talking] “We were just walking along, then all of a sudden they come riding down here and start—I didn’t even, I don’t even know what they looked like, I was so scared for my life.” [cut to a young woman standing talking]

News, 6:40 AM

Female reporter: “If we don’t even know them, then why they coming over here shooting? I thought I was going to die—I mean, sometimes it’s like living in a war zone.”
[cut to reporter standing talking] Police have not yet identified any of the victim’s names, as they are waiting to notify the parents. Jason?

Male anchor: That’s a terrible tragedy. Up next, your first look at the five-day forecast.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Placing a call.

Cell, 6:41 AM

Malika: Hello?

Kyin: Sun? This is Energy—did I wake you?

Malika: Energy? I’m sorry, I haven’t—

Kyin: No—I’m calling because I just saw on the news that there was a shooting on Minnesota last night. Have you heard anything about it?

Malika: Minnesota? Where?

Kyin: Right near the Metro stop.

Malika: Oh, ok. No, I didn’t hear anything. You want me to ask around?

Kyin: Yeah—make sure to take a lot of pictures, and—ok, just write everything down.

Malika: Ok.

Kyin: And has Ocean come over to meet with you yet?

Malika: Ocean? Oh—no, not yet. She called me, though. We’re supposed to have lunch together tomorrow.

Kyin: Ok, good. I know you’ll like her, she’s easy to talk to. And, Sun, you know, just so you remember, Ocean and I are just sort of guides, you know? You can decide how to run your own area however you want. I don’t tell Ocean what to do—we just meet and I offer her advice, and then she offers me advice, ok? So I want it to be the same with you. Once you get comfortable, you can offer us advice, too, ok?

Malika: Yeah—alright.

To the kitchen.

Rice form the
rice cooker.

Opening an
energy drink
from the
refrigerator.

Cracking an egg into a pan.

Sliding the egg onto the rice.

Cell, 6:48 AM

Kyin: And then, you know, the next area is Barry Farm—so I’m going to ask you help with whoever is running that area. You’ll have to talk to her and tell her how to run things.

Malika: Oh. When is that?

Kyin: Oh—no, don’t worry about that, that won’t be for at least a couple months. Just, for now, don’t rush yourself—just meet with Ocean tomorrow and listen to her advice—and don’t worry if Ocean and I are telling you different things, because that’s good, that how it’s supposed to work—there is no King or President or CEO—we’re all feeding information back and forth.

Malika: Alright.

Kyin: Alright. I’ll check in with you sometime next week—I’ll probably bring you some more cash. Call whenever you feel like it. Peace.

Malika: Ok, peace.

Kyin: Peace.

Gochujang.

To the
couch,
sitting
eating
talking.

Closing her left eye, her right—squinting.

8:50 AM

Columbia Road—standing talking with man in a coat ragged.

“Do you have somewhere to sleep?” she asks.

The man nodding. “Sure,” he says.

“Ok,” says Kyin.

Looking at the man—his hair unclean, shoes scuffed.

“I want to make you an offer,” says Kyin. “I want to give you money.”

“Ok,” says the man, holding out a fast-food cup.

“No,” she says, “I want to pay you to do a job for me.”

The frowning man—glancing askance.

“The way it works,” she says, “is if you do the job, I pay you. And each week I’ll come check up on you, and if you keep doing what I want, I’ll pay you more each week.”

The squinting man.

“What kind of job?” he asks.

9:40 AM

Dupont Circle—sitting talking with a man lying on the black bench, a blanket over his form.

“Do you have somewhere other than here to sleep—at night?” she asks.

The man nodding.

“Ok,” says Kyin. “I want to make you an offer—to give you a job.”

11:10 AM

The National Mall—walking talking with a man in clothing ragged.

1:15 PM

Georgetown—off M Street—sitting talking with a woman in clothing dirtied, pushing a cart.

6:09 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

To the radiator, holding out—rubbing—her palms.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 6:24 PM

Nodes—

Carver/Langston

Ocean

River is a highly productive node (Hechinger Mall)

60 Nodes and growing. Ocean has roughly 100 cameras and plenty of film. My expectation for each area is at least 5 productive rolls of film per 25 nodes; or, 1 out of every 5 nodes will produce photographs that we can use against the police, gangs, or dealers.

No matter what, any photograph with a human is good, because, over time, we can have a database of people from the neighborhood. We can then categorize who is “known” and who is “unknown.”

1 in 5 may be a high estimate—we’ll see. Of course, every neighborhood will be different.

Ocean is amazingly productive; she knows each of her nodes very well—she’s lived that area her entire life. So far, I’ve given Ocean \$2000. This is for her to use at her own discretion—to give to nodes, for film, etc. The majority of her nodes (55 of them) are only photographers.

She has 2 nodes that deal and bring in money, and with those 2 are another 2 that take pictures of the transactions. If we are able to replicate in the rest of the city what is present in this neighborhood, we will be well on our way.

Blog, 6:30 PM

Quarles

Sun

Sun is just learning the ropes. She is younger than Ocean, so she may take a while to learn how to recruit nodes. Ocean and Sun are meeting tomorrow for lunch. The good thing is that I think Sun has a much better chance of recruiting younger nodes.

Order of neighborhoods:

Barry Farm

Park Morton—Charles, Shawna, Alycia (I will approach Charles sometime next week)

Trinidad—in a few months, I'll ask Ocean to see if she can develop a leader for Trinidad (Trinidad is right next to Carver/Langston—across Maryland Avenue).

Truxton Circle

Sursum Corda

A while back, I mentioned Social Community Partners. This is the group that was awarded all the contracts for the New Communities Initiative. Social Community Partners (SCP) is joined up with First United States Bank (FUSB). SCP has close ties with the DC mayor and Council. FUSB has close ties with the Federal Government. They've received tons of money from the Federal Government over the years and, in fact, could be considered part of the Federal Government. I want here to lay out a brief map of FUSB, just to give you an idea of how huge this bank is. They've spent years and years building up and buying smaller banks.

History of First US Bank (FUSB)—connected to Social Community Partners (SCP).

This is only a partial list of bigger Banks that joined up to form FUSB. Some of these banks themselves were formed by combining smaller banks. So, for example, Bank SouthWest was formed by combining most all of the banks in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. If I were to list all of the banks that make up FUSB, including down to the smallest local banks, then I would need around 10 pages. Keep that in mind when reading the partial list below.

FUSB =

1. Bank of San Diego = Bank SouthWest + Bank of Southern California + Gold Rush Trust + West Coast Bank + SunBelt Bank + Southern California Bank

+

Blog, 7:04 PM

2. Bank of China = Northern Cities Trust + San Francisco City Bank + Northern Community Bank + Key City Bank + Bay Bridge Bank + Bank of Oakland + Silicon Savings + Northern California Bank and Trust + Redwood Savings + Sacramento City Savings + Davis Dollars Bank + Santa Barbara Savings Bank

+

3. Land Trust Corporation = American National Bank + Citizens Bank + State Street Bank + Second National Bank + Green Jacobs National Bank + Portland National Bank + First National Bank + Ranier Savings + Olympia Trust + Green City Savings

+

4. Third National Pacific Bank = Bank of Toledo + California National Bank + Asia Bank + American City Bank + First Canada Bank + Three Rivers Bank and Trust + Small Town Savings + Jefferson Bank

+

5. Valley Bank of Colorado = American Bank of Denver + Colorado National Bank + Rockies Trust Bank + Arizona National Bank + National Bank of Colorado + Sun City Bank + Phoenix Rising Trust + Red Rocks Savings

+

6. Illinois National Bank and Trust Company = Second City Savings + Detroit Savings + Indianapolis Trust and Loan + Indiana Savings Bank + National Bank of Illinois + St. Louis Savings + East St. Louis Trust + Midwest Bank + Midwest Union Group

+

9. Boston Bank = City Bank + New England Bank + Northern Bank + Providence Bank + Bank of Boston + BankBoston + Massachusetts Bank + First National Bank of Boston + Bay Bank

+

10. Southern States North America Bank = Florida Savings Bank + Miami City Bank + Jacksonville Savings + West Florida Trust + White Sand Savings + Sunny City Savings + Everglades Trust + Tampa Trust

+

11. Texas State Bank Corporation = Dallas Savings Bank + Houston Bank + Austin Trust and Savings + San Antonio Savings Bank + Fort Worth Savings + Oklahoma City Savings + South Texas Savings Bank

+

12. SOCIAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

As I wrote above, FUSB, for all intents in purposes, is a branch of the US Government. When it comes to home loans, HUD, and Eminent Domain, FUSB is Federal Government's "private" arm.

The ringing phone.

Cell, 8:01 PM

Kyin: Hello?

Kerry: Helen? This is Kerry Thompson. Is this a good time?

Kyin: Oh—Mrs. Thompson—this is great timing.

Kerry: Oh, it is?

Kyin: Yes—I think I've found your woman. But, just to be sure, I'd like you to go with me to take a look at her. Can we meet up Monday—around noon?

Kerry: Oh—wow. I can't believe, I didn't think you'd find her. Um. Wow. Huh, ok—wow, I'm nervous already just thinking about it.

Kyin: Well, I'm not sure if it's her—I'd rather you come with me to confirm it. But we can at least take a look. And I'll be with you, so you don't need to worry about anything.

Kerry: Alright, ok. Where should we meet?

Kyin: How about Dupont—in the circle around 11?

Kerry: 11, ok. Ok. Wow, I'm nervous. Is she—did you talk to her?

Kyin: No, not yet. I'll leave that to you. But don't think about it—we don't know if it's her yet, ok?

Kerry: Yes, alright, you're right.

Kyin: Ok—I'll see you Monday at 11. Bye.

Kerry: Bye.

Clicks on—mutes—
CCs the screen.

To the kitchen,
looking through the
refrigerator—beans,
noodles, cherry
tomatoes.

To the couch, sitting watching eating.

Saturday, December 12th

Clear, 29°

7:46 AM

Coming up Pennsylvania—Gettysburg.

Into the circle—parking.

Into the *Lincoln Diner*— pulling an envelope brown from her bag.

Patrick Walker seated in the rear of the restaurant.

Walking—tossing the envelope onto the table.

Sitting Kyin.

Patrick Walker staring—opening the envelope, looking through the photographs.

Looking up at Kyin.

“Ok,” he says, “now what?”

The waitress coming, bringing coffee.

The two ordering an onion omelet, pancakes.

“Now,” says Kyin, “You have a decision to make. You can either work with me, or you can lose your job—maybe worse.”

Patrick Walker sipping coffee creamed.

“Work with you how?” he asks.

“You’ll be protection when I need you, but most of the time we’ll use you as a beat cop.”

“We?”

Nodding Kyin. “Sure,” she says, she sips. “No more driving around in a cruiser, oblivious to the neighborhood. From now on, when you go to work, you walk around Carver and Langston—get to know the neighborhood. Talk to people. If you see a person walking by, say something friendly, ask them who they are.”

Patrick Walker leaning back.

“I don’t get it,” he says.

“What’s to get?” Kyin asks. “You’ll still be a cop—but instead of driving in a car and seeing people as criminals, you’ll be walking the beat, seeing people as people.”

Patrick Walker looking at Kyin.

The waitress bringing food on plates hot.

Kyin eating the omelet.

Patrick Walker holding up the pictures.

“What happens to these?” he asks.

Nodding Kyin. “Nothing,” she says, she shrugs. “Keep gambling. If you see another cop gambling, you may as well put them in touch with me, because I’ve already got pictures of them.”

Kyin eating.

Then looking up. “On your next day of work,” she says, “Start the beat in Carver and Langston. Start on Carver Terrace, then Langston Terrace—the Dwellings. We’ll be watching you and taking photographs, so if you don’t do as your told, we’ll know.”

Kyin reaching into her bag—pulling out a camera, film.

“Here,” she says, “you work for us now, so you’ll be needing this.”

Patrick Walker looking at the camera, the film.

"What's that for?" he asks.

"You take pictures," she says, "we all take pictures—how do you think I got those?" she asks, pointing to the photographs, "how do you think—do you think I chose this restaurant by chance?"

Patrick Walker looking up.

"What?" he asks. "What do you mean?"

Kyin cutting eggs—lifting the fork. "I mean," she says, "that we're always watching—we're always taking photographs."

Eating the egg.

"There's even," she says, "someone photographing us right now."

Patrick Walker stopping sipping—looking around the room.

Then turning looking through the rear window.

"Shit," he says, looking across the street.

Looking again at Kyin.

"So who do I take pictures of?" he asks.

Shrugging Kyin eating homefries. "Everyone," she says.

"Cops, dealers, crew members," she says. "The most important thing, though, is—if you catch someone doing something illegal, you don't arrest them."

"What?" he asks. "What do you mean?"

Cutting eggs. "I mean," says Kyin, "that you won't be arresting anyone anymore. From now on, if you catch someone, you cuff them, you take their picture, and you get their name. Then you let them know that you have their photograph, and that you can use it against them. Then you recruit them."

"Recruit them?"

Eating the omelet. "You bring them to our side," she says. "You give them a camera and film, you keep a record of who they are and where they live, and then you tell them what I'm telling you now. You tell them to take photographs, to keep a record, and to recruit more people."

Patrick Walker sitting staring—sipping.

Eating toast. "So," she says, "We'll be keeping an eye on you. And I'll check in on you every couple weeks. Just remember to focus first on Carver and Langston Terrace."

"But what's the point of this? What good are a bunch of pictures?"

Sipping Kyin. "What good are those?" she asks, pointing to the photographs on the table. Then looking up at him.

"The point," she says, "is that the way things are now isn't working—not for the poor people in the city, not for the people who live in these areas. The way the government is running things isn't working. So we're taking over—we're pushing the government out—we're running it ourselves.

"The government's answer is to drive by in a cruiser and yell at someone—to lock someone up—to intimidate—to bulldoze apartment complexes and push the poor out into the suburbs—to shoot people in the back if they look suspicious. It's not working for the government, and it's not working for the people who live in these places.

"I mean—you don't like it, do you? Do you like treating everyone in these neighborhoods like criminals?"

Patrick Walker frowning.

Nodding Kyin.

"Well—whether you like it or not, you won't do it anymore. You'll walk the beat, you'll do your best to make friends with the people that live there, you'll take photographs, you'll write down names, you'll recruit people, and you'll report back to me."

Standing pulling on her bag strap.

"I'll contact you in a few weeks," she says. "Let's say—by February you should have at least one hundred recruits."

Patrick Walker standing.

"What's your name?" he asks, "how do I contact you?"

"My name's Energy," says Kyin.

"If you do a good job," she says, "I'll give you my contact information in a few weeks."

Monday, December 14th

Sunny, 30°

11:55 AM

Sitting looking through the lens.

"Do you see her?"

"Not yet," says Kyin.

Handing the camera to Kerry Thompson.

Kerry looking through the lens—across at the embassy.

“She doesn’t usually come out until around noon,” says Kyin.

The two sitting waiting.

12:11 PM

Sabine exiting the embassy, stepping toward a sedan.

Long legs bending.

“That’s her—is that her?”

“Dammit,” says Kerry, looking up from her lap, “I wasn’t paying attention.”

Following the sedan onto Massachusetts.

“That’s ok,” says Kyin, “we’ll follow her—that’s my woman, though—you just have to see if it’s the woman from the picture.”

Kerry shaking her head. “Dammit—excuse me—I just can’t believe I missed her—she must’ve just ran into that car.”

“Yeah,” says Kyin. “She’s quick.”

Driving down Massachusetts—through Dupont—Thomas—Mount Vernon.

Pulling into a lot—parking.

“Ok,” says Kyin.

The two exiting—standing.

The sound of heels high stepping.

Sabine walking out onto 9th Street—down the brick sidewalk.

The two trotting behind.

“Oh, shit,” says Kerry, “I can’t see—I can’t tell.”

Nodding Kyin. “Just wait until you can see her from the front,” she says.

Sabine sliding into a restaurant—*Ad.Ab*.

The two following stopping.

Then slow entering the restaurant.

“Two?” asks the hostess.

The two nodding—silent.

They sit in chairs, two, a basket-table between them.

Ordering.

Kerry sitting looking behind Kyin.

“Can you see her?” asks Kyin.

Kerry nodding.

Then looking at Kyin.

"That's her," she says.

"Are you sure?"

Nodding Kerry—grabbing her chest.

"I don't feel—something's off," she says.

"Have a drink of water," says Kyin, holding the glass.

Drinking Kerry.

Lowering the glass. "Thank you," she says.

Then reaches into her purse—pulling out a photograph.

Looking behind Kyin.

"Yes," she says, handing the photograph to Kyin, "that's her—take a look for yourself."

Kyin looking at the photograph—then turning and looking behind herself, at Sabine.

Then turning back—nodding at Kerry.

"It's her alright," she says.

"I didn't know you had that," she says—returning the photograph.

Nodding Kerry. "Yes," she says. "I found it."

The waitress bringing food, placing it in the basket.

Kyin eating.

Kerry staring—narrowing her eyes.

1:45 PM

Driving following the sedan back to the Embassy—parking just off Massachusetts.

The two sitting watching Sabine enter through the main gate.

"I want to stay here a while longer," says Kerry.

"Just to see something," she says.

Nodding Kyin.

"Ok," says Kyin, "I'm gonna go home," she says.

Then reaches into her bag—handing Kerry a piece of paper.

"What's this?"

"I followed her home," says Kyin, "that's her apartment—or condo, I'm not sure."

Nodding Kerry—watching the Embassy. "Thank you," she says, putting the paper into her purse.

Then pulling out cash.

"Here," she says, handing Kyin the money, "I really—I can't thank you enough," she says.

Turning to look at Kyin—then back to the Embassy.

“Sure,” says Kyin, pocketing the bills, “thanks,” she says.

Nodding Kerry smiling.

The two exiting—shaking hands.

“Ok,” says Kyin. “Call anytime you need anything,” she says.

Then turns, climbing up 24th Street.

Wednesday, December 16th

Cloudy, 28°

5:55 AM

Standing smoking.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—breathing.

Kyin with fists in the pocket.

A car passing.

White smoke blown blue.

6:45 AM

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:45 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

45 nodes—all people I know. We all have a similar outlook on things, and I’m sure we’ll be able to find more nodes in no time. I’ve let each of my nodes know about you, showing them your writings, and they are all ready to listen to you.

PLEASE SEND MORE OF YOUR WRITING.

We’ve been taking shifts, tailing the NSA employees as they come out of Yakima Listening Station (YLS). I’ve attached here a series of photographs—all NSA employees, each with a codename attached. I’m sure you can figure out what is what by looking at the photographs, but there is one thing I wanted to point out: Winter (you’ll notice she’s a blond woman, roughly 5’5” tall) seems to be—we’re not sure what’s going on with her.

Email Inbox, 6:48 AM

From: Darger

I wanted to ask what you thought of her before I offered my own opinion, but I still wanted to point her out.

Each of my nodes—all of us, we're college or grad students or fresh out. Did you know that? We're all each about 2-3 hours away from Yakima (and the NSA Station is actually a little North of Yakima in a small town).

About 30 of the nodes come from the Seattle area and suburbs, and the other 15 are from Portland.

I do have 1 node living in Kennewick, which is a small town just down the road from Yakima.

I don't have much else to report, I'll just let the photographs speak for themselves. Tell me anything else you need us to do, and I'll keep working on recruiting nodes and asking others to recruit. I have to tell you, Energy, people here are fired-up about this, and they all asked me to thank you. We are all sick of our bureaucratic blahblah government that does nothing but spy on us and take money from big corporate lobbyists. We are ready to do something big.

Ok, that's all.

Darger

Clicking open the attached photographs.

Pictures of cars, the highway, a road into the mountains.

A man driving—parking—entering a house. The man labeled—*Autumn*.

A woman filling her gas tank—driving—entering a house. The woman labeled—*Summer*.

A series of photographs of men and women—driving, entering and exiting houses, shopping, eating at restaurants, walking, sleeping.

At the bottom of the stack, a blond woman—*Winter*. The woman driving, entering a house. The woman sitting at a bar, drinking. The woman turned—looking as if she is facing the camera—smiling. The woman sleeping.

The woman—*Winter*—smoking—standing looking toward the lens.

Kyin looking at the photograph—holding it at arm's length.

"Do I know you?" she asks.

Leaning back onto the couch—holding the photograph out—the photograph in the light—in the background the painting—a vast grid of circles and squares—the woman staring at the lens, at Kyin staring back.

"I know you," she says.

Friday, December, 18th

Clear, 36°

9:02 AM

Coming into Quarles. Left into the alley before 45th Street—cutting across to Anacostia.

At 45th—entering a yard, a building.

Malika yawning opening the door. “Energy—you’re early,” she says.

Nodding Kyin. “Hey, Sun,” she says.

Entering the warmth rubbing her hands.

Malika passing through the room into the kitchen.

Following Kyin.

“Coffee,” says Malika, handing Kyin a cup.

“Thanks,” says sipping Kyin.

The two sitting.

“I’ve invited Ocean,” says Kyin.

Malika raising her brows.

“I wanted to just run a check-up,” says Kyin.

Nodding Malika.

9:22 AM

Knocking—the two walking to the door to standing Lynn.

“Damn cold,” she says smiling, entering the house.

“Yeah,” says Malika.

Nodding Kyin. “Thanks for coming, Ocean,” she says.

“Of course,” says Lynn.

The three entering the kitchen—pouring coffee, sitting.

From her bag, Kyin pulling out a notebook. “I just thought,” she says, “we should see where we’re at. Maybe do this once every couple weeks or so. Once a month.”

Nodding Lynn reaching into a bag—pulling out a smaller bag brown.

“This is several rolls of finished film,” she says.

Nodding Kyin. “You know what’s on any of it?”

Lynn shaking her head. “Not much,” she says. “I labeled them with the node. River has more gambling photographs. There’s a cop been hanging around the Terrace, and —”

"Yes—good," says Kyin, "he's with us. I know—I wanted to see if he, to see what he would do—that's part of why I set up this meeting, to see what he's been doing. What has he been doing?"

Sipping Lynn. "Alright, so—so he's with us?"

Nodding Kyin.

The two sitting looking at Kyin.

"He's—he'll be doing what we're doing," says Kyin, "except he'll be recruiting cops. Don't let him know—not yet, at least, that you or any of the nodes over there know about him. In fact, don't tell any of your nodes yet—just maybe wait a week or so. Unless you have to. I want to make sure he really is doing what he's supposed to."

"Alright," says Lynn, "then—he's been—just walking around the neighborhood. That's all he does all evening—sometimes nights. I haven't seen much of him, just heard a few—a few nodes reported him to me, said they took pictures."

Nodding Kyin. "Good," she says. "That's what we want from him—for now."

Nodding Lynn. "Ok," she says.

"And—do you need anything—does River, how's she doing?"

"Good," says Lynn. "Says they keep coming in playing—a bunch of 'em. I think it's the cold weather, bringing them inside."

"Good," says Kyin. "We've got—if this cop does well, then we've got a foothold in the police department. Beginning the virus. What we need next is a foothold in the gangs, the dealers. And we need to start young—with the kids."

The two women nodding.

The three heading into the living room, sitting on the chair, the couch.

"I went to that shooting last week," says Malika. "It wasn't—they were down Barry Farms. A car filled with three boys—they just drove in and started shooting. Nobody says why they did it."

"Did you find out who these boys were?"

Nodding Malika. "Yeah," she says, "They live over there, back of it—Brothers Place. You know, I wasn't sure what to do. I took a few photographs of their building, but that's it."

Lynn leaning forward. "You have—what, two nodes over in Quarles?"

Nodding Malika.

"Ok," says Kyin, "A girl died—right?"

"Yes," says Malika. "And people—the neighborhood is angry."

“Ok,” says Kyin, “what we’ll do is—hold on,” she says.

Kyin reaching into her pocket, pulling out her phone—dialing.

Cell, 10:12 AM

Patrick Walker: Hello?

Kyin: Hey—this is Energy.

Walker: Ok. I’m not at work yet, so—

Kyin: No, don’t worry about that—we’ve been watching you, you’re doing a great job with that, keep it up. The reason I called is because, you know about that drive-by shooting last week off Minnesota?

Walker: I don’t—I heard about it, but I don’t have any inside information, if that’s what you’re asking.

Kyin: No, that’s not what I’m asking. I have the address of the shooters, ok? So, I’m going to hand the phone here to Sun—that’s our lead contact across the Anacostia—and she’s going to give you the address of the shooters, and then you’re going to do what you see fit. Ok?

Walker: What?

Malika: Hello? This is Sun.

Walker: Sun?

Malika: Yes. There were three shooters. I don’t know the apartment numbers, but I do know the building, ok? They all live in the same building.

Walker: Ok—hold on, let me get a pen.

Malika: Ok, ready?

Walker: Ok, go ahead.

Malika: Ok, the address is 3700 Brothers Place Southeast. It’s off the end of MLK. You got it?

Walker: Ok—got it.

Looking nodding,
handing the phone to
Malika.

Malika looking at
nodding Kyin.

Malika leaning,
reaching grabbing a
notebook from a desk
drawer—flipping
through the pages.

Handing the phone to
Kyin.

Cell, 10:18 AM

Kyin: This is Energy again. Ok, so we're good to go?

Walker: Yeah, ok.

Kyin: Ok—so I'll call you sometime next week.

Walker: Ok.

Kyin: Alright, bye.

Sliding the phone into her pocket.

"When someone's been killed," says Kyin, "we don't have a choice—we can't recruit the killer."

The two nodding their heads.

"But from now on, if you have proof of a crime, if you've documented it, just keep track of it and recruit them—the criminal. If it's a murder, a rape—something like that, then send it to either me or this cop we have."

The two nodding their heads.

The three sitting sipping coffee black.

Kyin looking at Malika. "How're you doing?" she asks.

"Fine," says Malika.

"I gave her some ideas," says Lynn. "Start with the people you know."

"Yes," says Malika. "I got two girls already, and—you know, I know I can get more of my friends to do this."

Nodding Kyin.

"There's a lot of angry people where I live," says Malika. "In this neighborhood. Down Minnesota. A driveby—shooting at kids."

Nodding Kyin. "We have to use that anger," she says. "Channel it—recruit people."

Nodding Lynn. "It's sad," she says, "but that's where we live, what we deal with. That's why we're doing this, right? To change all that—right?"

Nodding Kyin.

"You know," she says, "I—it's tempting for me to talk about this, but—and I will sometimes—sometimes I'll give you my opinion. But I want each of you—and your nodes—talk to them about this—I want you to find your own reasons for doing this. I don't want to tell you, ok? I want *you* to tell *me*—tell each other, ok? I mean—I think we

each know that something needs to be done, but we also each probably each have our own reasons for doing it. So if we try to say we all have the same reasons, it won't make sense. You see what I'm saying?"

"Sure," says Lynn.

Nodding Malika.

"Ok," says Kyin—standing. "I'm gonna go."

The two standing.

"Thanks for coming," says Kyin, "and let's plan on meeting again, say, the first week of January."

The two nodding.

Kyin looking at Malika. "If I were you," she says, "I'd go on down to where the shooting was—talk to people. Get them curious. Anger is the best way to recruit people. People who are angry at the government. The government bulldozes their houses and brings in cops that don't protect them."

Nodding Lynn.

Nodding Malika.

The three moving to the door—opening, out onto the stairs.

Kyin and Lynn heading West—toward Minnesota.

Grabbing the X3 Bus—across Benning.

11:00 AM

Coming across Benning to Maryland.

The two stopping walking behind a pharmacy.

"Thanks again," says Kyin, "for talking with Sun. I can tell she's more comfortable around you. I think—you know—sometimes people are intimidated by me. I don't know what it is or why—it's just always been that way."

Nodding Lynn. "Yeah," she says. "I see it."

The two exchanging envelopes brown.

Then going each their separate ways.

7:45 PM

Cate standing walking into the kitchen—grabbing a bottle of burgundy.

The two sitting watching a film.



9:27 PM

The two sitting drinking talking.

"Freaky movie," says Cate.

Nodding Kyin. "A little dated," she says. "But one of my favorites."

Cate standing walking into the kitchen.

"It's like," she says, "a crazy version of *Rear Window*. If Jimmy Stewart was—" grabbing wine bottled, "if the guy he was watching, turns out he wasn't a killer. So that—" pouring the wine, "that would make Jimmy Stewart just a nosy jerk. Or a spy."

Cate coming sitting.

"Yes—it's almost as if," she says, she sips, "the fact that the guy he's watching is a murderer justifies Jimmy Stewart's actions. Whereas this movie goes the other way."

Nodding sipping Kyin.

"More than that, though," she says. "Jimmy Stewart would have to be the killer—he would have to murder Grace Kelly."

Cate crossing legs—sipping looking at Kyin.

"They could make an updated version of this, though—a remake. For one thing, the knife coming out of the camera is cheesy."

Smiling sipping Kyin.

"Yeah," she says. "A bit. Then—what would the weapon be in a remake?"

"Because it'd—" Cate touching Kyin's forearm, "it'd have to be a digital camera, right?"

“Digital, yes—” says Kyin, “though, they probably have made a remake—or something close enough. A man walking around with a camera killing women while filming it. It sounds familiar, doesn’t it? Like even if it hasn’t been made, it seems as if it’s been made.”

“But no,” says Cate sipping smiling leaning into Kyin, “it wouldn’t be a man—if it were made today, it’d be a woman. A woman walking around with a camera killing men. And it’s not just the act of filming it—it’s that the camera itself is the weapon.”

Sipping Kyin.

“And how does she kill them—how does the camera work?”

Cate grabbing her lip—between finger and thumb. “Yes,” she says, “how *does* she kill them?”

The two sitting quiet sipping.

Nodding Kyin.

“Well,” she says, “I guess it would depend on the genre. If it’s a techno-thriller, she’d kill them with some kind of laser or something—coming out of the lens. If it were a horror film, then she’d probably kill them with some kind of voodoo—maybe by digitally altering their image.”

Smiling Cate, touching Kyin’s arm. “A cursed camera,” she says, “that kills anyone that’s been photographed by it.”

Nodding Kyin.

“Yes,” she says, “something like that.”

Monday, December 21st

Light rain, 35°

5:59 AM

Standing smoking.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—pulling a cap over his ears.

Nodding Kyin breathing air cold.

Mr. Dixon squinting.

A long drag—inhaling—exhaling.

6:24 AM

From her coat—the brown bag, the envelope, the folder; writing the date on the folder, then sliding it into the bookshelf.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:24 AM

Female Anchor: Also, reports coming in today that the DC police have caught the alleged shooters involved in that horrible drive-by incident just off of Minnesota Avenue in Southeast. Tracy has more.

Female reporter: Yes, Hannah, it was a terrible tragedy, with a young girl being killed, and a community outraged. [cut to a woman crying and yelling] “I don’t know why they won’t find out who killed my daughter! Doesn’t anybody care?” [cut to a reporter] Well, the police have now found the shooters—three young men, living in an apartment in Congress Heights. Police said they received a tip from an anonymous caller, leading them to the house. [cut to Police Chief] “I think what this proves is that when the community is involved, when they’re not afraid of speaking out, when they’re not afraid of being accused of being a snitch, then justice can be served.” Police need the help of the community. This case proves that. [cut to reporter] Back to you, Hannah.

Female Anchor: Thanks, Tracy. Up next, Republicans and Democrats are at it again: same old partisan politics, or something more?

To the kitchen,
making coffee.
Cracking an egg
into a pan.

Spooning rice,
kimchi, into the
egg—ketchup,
cheese.

Sliding the egg
onto a plate.

Carrying the plate,
a mug, to the
couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

7:02 AM

Dialing.

Cell, 7:02 AM

Patrick Walker: Hello?

Kyin: This is Energy.

PW: Oh—so, did you see the news?

Kyin: Yep—great work. This is only for murders—for most crimes, we’ll just take photographs of the criminal and confront them.

PW: Yeah, I think I get it. [Laughs] Like what you did to me.

Kyin: Yes—exactly like that. Any recruits yet?

PW: No, not recruits yet—but I’ve got a few guys in mind.

Kyin: Ok, good. Really, I just called to say good work. I’ll check in again later.

PW: Ok.

Kyin: Peace.

5:55 PM

Coming up Georgia.

Into *Juke*.

Men standing leaning drinking. Bellies to the bar.

Charles down at the end nodding to Kyin.

"Hi," she says, sitting.

Nodding Charles.

Ordering Kyin—drinking.

The two sitting talking.

6:25 PM

"No," says Charles, "I'm just being real about it. There's no sense fighting something that's already over and done. Look on the news, you'll see the mayor and the council standing giving a speech over here, people clapping about tearing Morton down. 'We worked hard,' the mayor will say, 'but finally we're able to tear this eyesore down.' And that will be that."

Drinking Charles.

"I'm not saying you're wrong," says Kyin. "I realize that not all of these can be won—that some areas will be bulldozed—yeah, probably Park Morton first. What I'm saying is that it's not about winning a battle here and losing a battle over there. I mean, that's the old mentality of taking on the government like it's a war or something—staging protests, rallies, voting, all that old bullshit. I don't and never will believe in any of that tired old shit."

Drinking Kyin.

Charles shaking his head. "Then—if you don't believe in that, then—I don't get what you believe in."

Nodding Kyin. "Right—that's what I'm trying to make clear. I believe in creating a virus, in gradually slowly changing the atmosphere, the bloodlines. It's not about protests or voting, ok? None of that. It's about infecting their ways of thinking, their ways of behaving, of living. It's about—ok, let me give you a for instance."

Taking off her glasses—holding them up.

"You see these?"

Nodding Charles.

Putting her glasses back on.

“Right,” she says, “I’ve only been wearing these for a couple months or so. Before that, I didn’t really know that I needed glasses. I would just walk around and everything was fine—my life was normal. But, ok, so one day I decided to see an eye doctor—and I don’t even remember why I went. I just did. That’s what you do when you have insurance and they send you a reminder card. You just go—even if you don’t need to.

“So now,” she says, “I wear glasses—and I don’t, most of the time, I don’t even realize that I’m wearing them. They’re just there—sitting on my face, changing the way I see the world—the way the world sees me.”

“Changing the system,” says Charles.

Shaking her head—drinking.

“No,” says Kyin, “not that either—I hate that phrase, ‘changing the system’—what’s a system? It’s just another tired old phrase that protesters and organizers love to chant. “I’m talking about changing the way people see things—without them even knowing it. Glasses. People are dying out here, getting shot—people dealing, people stuck in their lives—people poor just because they were born in a bad way and they can’t get out—people—so what I’m saying is, the Mayor, the Council, the marble white buildings down there—symbolic people—most of the city, they can’t even see these people—they’re invisible. If they tear down Park Morton, do you think most people in this city will even notice? They could tear it all down, tear down half of Southeast, half of Northeast—from down Maryland Avenue heading East—do you think those people would even notice that shit?”

Charles shaking his head drinking.

“Of course they wouldn’t,” says Kyin, “because they can’t see—because you’re all invisible.”

Drinking Kyin. “I mean,” she says, “it’s hard not to become numb to it, you know? You read the paper, watch the news—it’s the same thing every day—a young man shot, a young man found dead, a young man shot, a young man found dead, a young man shot, a young man found dead.”

Inhaling Kyin.

Nodding Charles. “I hear you,” he says.

Drinking Kyin.

“So, I mean,” she says, “I understand how people become numb to it. It’s just repetitive. I mean, think about it as—we can’t worry about everything all the time. We can’t worry

about every global disaster going on, you know? In a way, the news teaches us to ignore these things. Every day, every news story is about some disaster, right? A tsunami, an earthquake, an uprising, an earthquake, a hurricane, a tornado, a shooting spree, a murder, an ethnic cleansing, an earthquake. So—if we became personally affected by every story, we wouldn't be able to function."

An older man walking standing behind the two sitting.

The man drunk, looking at Charles. "What's she on about?" he asks.

Charles looking back over his shoulder. "Shooting and killing."

The older man sitting shaking his head.

Turning to look at Kyin. "No sense talking about it," he says, "there's nothing you can do."

The bartender bringing beers cold.

7:15 PM

Coming down Morton.

Charles pausing—lighting a cigarette.

"Alright," he says. "You got me. I'll give it a shot. But I still think most people in this neighborhood have given up."

Nodding Kyin. "That's all I'm asking," she says, she slurs. "If most people aren't interested, then ok. But if we get just a few people, then that's something."

Young men standing looking—thick coats, hoods over their heads.

A bracing wind slowing their walking.

"It's almost Christmas," says Charles.

Nodding Kyin.

"I'll contact you in a week or so," she says. "See how you're making out."

Charles nodding watching Kyin walking back toward Georgia.

Standing waiting for the bus.

Sunday, December 27th

Clear, 27°

8:08 AM

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 8:09 AM

From: 2cyborg

Beingbecoming,

Longtime. Of course, we've all been talking about you, wondering what you're doing. So I thought I'd check in. You know the group, we're all the same. Vatbrain, Swampman.

Have you succeeded in making your ideas into actions? Can the ideal world be made real?

Myself, I have my doubts. We all know that once the pure world of ideas comes down to earth, it can't help but get a little muddy, a little cloudy.

What about money and technology—did you take my suggestion, are you making use of those? Trust me, you won't last long without some source of income.

Ideas can only keep people going for so long. Ideas don't feed people. Ideas don't keep people warm.

Well, if it helps any, I admire you for trying, even if you've already failed.

The rest of us just sit around and spout ideas without actually doing anything.

Yours,

2cyborg

Email Outbox, 8:16 AM

To: 2cyborg

2cyborg,

Thanks for the kind(ish) words. Yes, to answer your question, I did take your suggestion, and I've come up with at least a temporary way for making money. It's not perfect, but it's working so far. I've found that there are a lot of people out there like me, a lot of people angry, tired of letting others control the world of action. So I've already found a nice sized set of people who are willing to do something.

I can't visit Thunkchat anymore, it just makes me angry—when I'm there, I always feel as if I'm stuck in some ivory tower.

But I still appreciate your emails. Say hi to the others.

Beingbecoming

Email Inbox, 8:21 AM

From: Mom

Kyin,

Please call me. I got a voicemail, and it sounds like your brother, but I'm not sure.

I'm worried.

Love,

Mom

To the kitchen, pulling her phone from the charger.

Placing a call.

Cell, 8:24 AM

Chin Hae Choi: Hello?

Kyin: Hi, Mom.

CHC: Oh, hello. Oh, Kyin, I was worried because I got a message from your brother, but I don't know what he's saying, he's talking so quietly.

Kyin: I thought you said you weren't sure if it was him. Are you driving?

CHC: Yes, I'm driving.

Kyin: So, how do you know it was Ian?

CHC: It sounded like him—I know it was him.

Kyin: Ok, so what was he saying? Did he say where he was?

CHC: He just said, "Hello world."

Kyin: What?

CHC: "Hello world." That's all he said.

Kyin: I don't get it.

CHC: That's why I emailed you.

Kyin: You know what, Mom? There's no sense worrying about this. As far as I'm concerned, nothing's changed. If Ian wants to contact us, to tell us where he is, then he will. If he won't, then there's nothing we can do.

CHC: I know it was him.

Kyin: And I believe you. So, that's good, right? At least we know now that he's still alive. But, I mean, we know Ian, Mom, and there's no sense getting all worked up over this. Right?

CHC: Maybe.

Kyin: Ok, fine. I'm gonna go. Just call me if he calls again, ok?

CHC: Yes, ok.

Kyin: Ok, I love you, Mom, bye.

Tossing the phone onto the bed.

The heel of her palms rubbing her eye sockets, her forehead.

Then reaching into her pocket—grabbing rubbing the stone.

Thursday, December 31st

Cloudy, 28°

6:45 AM

Sitting on the couch, leaning over the coffee table.

Sipping coffee black.

Flipping through folders, through pages—taking notes.

9:57 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 9:57 AM

I've been looking over Cate's folders for about 3 hours now. Taking notes, looking for patterns. Of course, I haven't learned much, because I'm not a cryptologist.

Meetings next week to check in with everyone.

Closing the computer.

Sliding onto her side.

Dozing.

6:26 PM

Knocking.

"What?" says Kyin.

Sitting up. "Oh," she says.

Standing walking opening the door.

Cate standing in the hallway. "Hey," she says, "did I wake you?"

Yawning Kyin. "Yeah," she says, "but that's ok—I needed to get up anyway."

Staring silent Cate—holding her hands.

"You want to do something?" asks Kyin.

"Yeah—something," says Cate—smiling.

Nodding Kyin. "Ok," she says, "come on in."

The two entering the apartment.

Kyin to the kitchen for water cold.

Standing Cate.

"I've never been in here," she says.

Walking looking at the wall.

"Is that a painting?" she asks.

Kyin coming drinking holding a glass. "Yes," she says, sitting on the couch.

"My brother painted it."

Cate sitting looking at the painting.

Then turning to look at the coffee table, the folders.

Bending to look through the pages.

Then raising her head to look at Kyin.

"Where did you get these?" she asks.

Shrugging Kyin. "I just found them," she says.

"Found them how—where?" asks Cate.

"In the trash," says Kyin.

Cate staring at Kyin.

"You found them in the trash?"

Nodding Kyin leaning over the folders.

"Yeah," she says, "but I can't figure out what any of it means."

Flipping through the pages—holding pointing.

"This, for instance—'Energy runs Green and Blue.' What the heck does that mean?"

Cate looking at the page, at Kyin.

"I don't know," she says.

Nodding Kyin. "I know," she says. "Like it was written by some lunatic, right?"

Continuing flipping through the pages, the folders.

Cate looking at the pages, at Kyin.

Standing stretching Kyin. "Ok," she says, "just let me get dressed real quick."

7:11 PM

Coming down Connecticut.

Passing groups in suits and dresses smiling laughing looking at Cate and Kyin.

"Happy new year!" they yell.

Saturday, February 6th

Snow, 20°

8:37 AM

Coming up Maryland—across I Street.

Climbing up the metal stairs.

Lynn standing on the stoop smiling.

"Cold," she says.

Nodding Kyin. "Damn cold," she says.

The two walking into the building. Down the hall, into the apartment.

Malika sitting on the couch—sipping coffee.

“Hey, Energy,” she says.

“Hey, Sun,” says smiling Kyin.

Walking into the kitchen. Patrick Walker standing pouring coffee.

He turns—looking at Kyin.

“Morning, Energy,” he says. “You look frozen.”

Nodding Kyin. “Morning, Iron,” she says.

Patrick Walker handing her his mug. “I think you need this more than I do,” he says.

Taking the mug. “Thanks,” she says.

Nodding Patrick Walker reaching into the cupboard. Grabbing another mug—pouring.

“I think we’ll need another pot,” he says.

9:02 AM

The four sitting on the couch, chairs.

A phone ringing—Kyin answers, walks to open the door.

Charles standing smiling on the stoop.

“You look damn cold,” says Kyin.

Nodding Charles.

“That’s because I am,” he says, he smiles—hanging up his phone.

9:10 AM

The five sitting on the couch, chairs.

Sipping coffee, tea.

Kyin holding a notebook on her lap, a pen.

“I’d like first,” she says, “to go over everyone’s numbers—how many nodes, how much film, how many cameras do you need, how many cameras do you have left, money—things like that.”

Kyin looking at Lynn.

Lynn opening a notebook. “Ok,” she says, “I got 89 nodes in Carver Langston, and 14 nodes in Trinidad. I got around 100 rolls of film sitting here—I told everyone to take it easy for a while, because it’s kindof slow around here—probably will be until the rains pass by in April.”

Nodding Kyin writing. “How many of those nodes have been turned, and how many have been straight recruited?”

Lynn looking at Patrick Walker. "Well," she says, "I've been working with Iron here, and—" she stops, nodding at him.

Patrick Walker leaning forward. "So, what I do is, if I've got a criminal, and it looks like we'll be able to use him, then what I'll do is I'll contact Ocean—I'll have her come down, and she'll take over. So that way, she can run that side of things, and also so he knows that if he causes her trouble, she'll contact me."

Nodding Kyin. "So that's been working? Any trouble with it yet?"

Shrugging Lynn. "Course those boys are the hardest to turn. They don't like being told what to do, especially by a woman or the police. But, so far it's working out. We've got four gang members, all of them working for us."

"Of course," says Patrick Walker, "they're probably still with their crews. But, I mean, so long as we get something out of them, I think it's worth it."

Nodding Kyin. "All that matters," she says, "is that it's a start. Do they know where you live, Ocean?"

Ocean shaking her head. "I don't think so—but I've told all of the nodes that live in this building to keep an eye out. You never know. That sort of thing isn't too hard to find out around here."

Kyin turning to Patrick Walker. "Ok," she says, "so how many officers have you recruited?"

Patrick Walker opening a notebook—reading. "I've got 15 guys so far—these are all guys I got with the help of River and Ocean, watching the gambling going on down Hechinger. These guys are all spread out—two of em work in Anacostia, another three near Petworth, one in Georgetown, four in Capital Hill—all spread out."

"That's good," says Kyin. "Anything that's a stepping stone to us covering the city is good."

1:30 PM

Down the bright aisles. Grabbing a water, jerky, a large sheet of poster paper.

Developing pictures—a pile of envelopes and CD-ROMs slid into a bag.

Carrying the bag up Columbia to home.

2:47 PM

Into the apartment. To the kitchen, making coffee.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 2:50 PM

From: Darger

Energy,

I'm hoping you'll approve.

As of now, I have around 200 nodes. About 120 of these are in Seattle, 60 in Portland, the other 20 spread out. Most of these nodes are college or grad students working hard to recruit more nodes.

So, I think you know that I've got a node in Kennewick—his name is Black Rock. He's lived there his whole life, and he's let me know that if you travel up the Columbia River from Kennewick, you end up at the Eastern side of the Yakima Firing Station—the NSA listening post. Ok, so that's interesting.

But what's even more interesting is that, before you hit the NSA, coming up the Columbia River, you hit the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. Hanford is the largest nuclear waste site in the US, and it's where they have tons and tons of radioactive waste just sitting there. Right next to the river, right!?

Crazy.

So, of course, I've spread this information to all of my nodes, trying to get feedback on what we should do with this information. I mean, right there, not even twenty miles apart, we have the largest nuclear waste site in the US and we have an NSA listening post.

Energy, I don't think I've told you about the makeup of my nodes. Most all of these people are either in college or fresh out of college. I got to thinking about it, and I realized that who you're working with over there is probably not even close to who I'm working with over here. Most of these people are what I call eco-freaks (I use it as a compliment). They are obsessed with NATURE (big letters) and the ENVIRONMENT.

I'm telling you that, because when my node from Kennewick let me know about Hanford, and when I let my other nodes know about all this, they just freaked out.

NUCLEAR WASTE!!!!!!! SHIT!!!!!!!

That doesn't begin to describe how these people reacted. So, I mean, I'm holding back the gates here—I need to bring some reason to these people.

It's so damn easy to recruit people over here, that—I mean, because it's so easy, it makes me wonder how loyal they'll be, you know? How far are they willing to go, right? I mean, we can't all be suicidal. Haha.

But right now, we're recruiting like crazy. But the kind of people, most all of them are eco-freaks.

Email Inbox, 2:50 PM

From: Darger

So, I'm starting to realize that it's inevitable—we'll end up doing something about Hanford. I mean, I'm telling you this Energy, and I mean, I'd like to look at all the possibilities, but I think in the end I won't be able to say otherwise.

So, that's my update. We're recruiting like crazy.

We're moving toward a meeting of Hanford and NSA. Nuclear waste and National Security Agents. Quite a mix, huh?

Darger

Email Outbox, 3:11 PM

To: Darger

Good news, all.

One of the driving forces behind our un-group is the idea of localization.

Local, local, local.

We do not seek global answers—that would be a form of jargonizing.

To say, "There is one answer for all of the country, all of the world"—that is jargonizing.

That is what governments do.

There is not one answer for everyone. The many cannot be reduced to one.

The world is variegated—multifaceted—infinite.

We seek local answers—LOCALIZE.

CANT, NOT JARGON.

DIALECT, NOT JARGON.

It would not make sense to address the same concerns, to speak of the same things where you live and where I live.

We live in two different local contexts. The main concern of my area is murdered citizens (by cops, by gang members, by dealers), and just the general conditions of living in a tough part of town.

You need to confer with your nodes and decide the main area of concern for your local context. If that is an ecological or environmental concern, so be it. Don't be afraid of an "eco-freak" label. If it involves Hanford, so be it.

To be clear: Hanford sounds like a good idea—run with it.

Darger—one thing I want to point out, and I want you to point out to your nodes. This is not Seattle 1999. We do not believe in loud protests that draw attention to themselves.

PROTESTS ARE FOR THE SAKE ONLY OF PROTESTS.

Email Outbox, 3:15 PM

To: Darger

The only thing that protesting accomplishes is to make the protestors feel good about themselves, as if they accomplished something—when, in fact, the only thing that they accomplish is to make themselves feel good.

There are these long-held beliefs among “protest groups” and “organizers” and “mobilizers” that the way to make things better is to BE LOUD and to CARRY PLACARDS and to MAKE SIGNS and to BURN THINGS to MAKE BOMBS and YELL and SCREAM!!!!!!

What’s probably the funniest thing to me is that these same people believe in VOTING! HA!!!!

None of these tactics work.

NONE OF THESE TACTICS WORK:

NOT YELLING AND SCREAMING

NOT PROTESTS

NOT VOTING

NOT CARRYING PLACARDS

NOT BURNING THINGS

NOT GETTING ARRESTED

NOT SWALLOWING TEAR GAS

THERE IS NO SOCIETY OR COMMUNITY; THERE ARE ONLY ASSOCIATIONS.

We, the un-group, seek the opposite of these actions.

WE SEEK, ABOVE ALL ELSE, TO BE INVISIBLE.

WE SEEK NOT TO CALL ATTENTION TO OURSELVES.

We seek to gradually—so that no one will notice—alter the environment—the atmosphere.

Localize.

Invisibility.

Un-group.

Smash jargons.

Energy

4:08 PM

Carrying the computer to the desk.

To the kitchen for coffee black.

To the coffee table, lifting her bag onto her lap. Pulling out envelopes—photographs.

Sorting the photographs into piles—neighborhoods—streets—buildings.

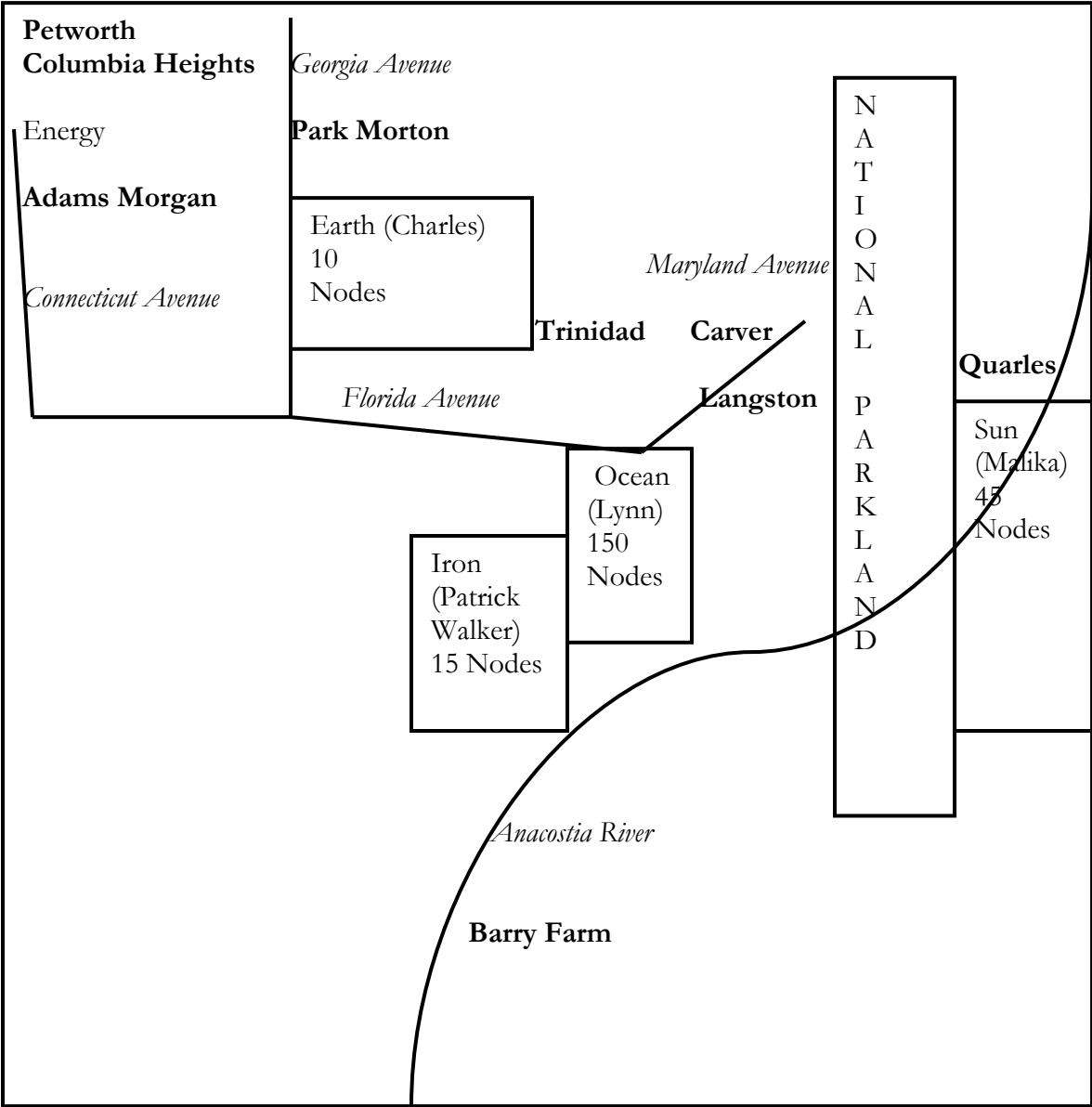
Taking notes—labels—names.

5:56 PM

Clearing off the coffee table.

To the desk, grabbing the sheet of poster paper. Laying the paper flat on the coffee table.

Making a map.



Leaning back into the cushions.
Sitting looking at the rough sketch.
Rectangles and lines crossing and connecting.
Leaning onto her side.
Dozing.

Sunday, February 7th
Snow, 18°
7:19 AM

Coughing Kyin waking. To the kitchen for water cold.
Making tea.
To the couch, sitting sipping. Looking over the rough outline—the map.
Neighborhoods, nodes.
Flipping through the stacks of photographs labeled and categorized.
A woman laughing pushing a carriage.
A group of young men half inside and outside standing talking.
A group of men inside, mixed in age, standing holding money.
A group of women sitting talking.
Two men—exchanging cash for packages.
A police officer—*Iron* (Officer Patrick Walker)—looking at the camera as he places cuffs on a young man.
An older man sitting in a car smoking a pipe, a woman sitting on his right.
Kyin leaning forward—raising the picture into the light.
Sitting sipping looking.
“I know you,” she says.
7:48 AM
Carrying the computer to the couch.
Searching—“DC Councilman,” “list of DC City Council Members,” “Pictures of DC City Council Members.”
Searching, reading, refining.
Searching—“DC Council members home addresses.”

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 8:22 AM

An interesting development! When I receive a batch of photographs, I sort them into neighborhoods—giving “names” to each person. If I already have a photograph of someone, I put the new photograph with the old. I also sort photographs into categories, such as “Crew member,” “Cop,” “Node,” “Unknown,” etc.

So, this morning, I’m half-awake. Drinking tea, because I woke up with a nasty sore throat, and I come across this photograph of a guy that looks familiar, and he’s sitting in a car smoking a crack pipe.

Then—suddenly, it hits me—I know this guy—he’s a DC Councilmember. I’ve seen him on the local news—also, the DC government has its own special TV station, and I’ve seen him there a countless number of times.

So I get my computer, and I look up the DC Council, look up photographs—sure enough, there he is, smiling for a group photograph—“DC Councilmembers”.

Crazy, right?

I looked up his home address:

4512 Q Street Southeast

I’ll give him a visit soon.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the screen. Flipping to the DC Government channel.

Coughing sitting sipping tea.

9:35 AM

The phone singing vibrating.

Cell, 9:35 AM

Kyin: Hello?

Chin Hae Choi: Kyin? Did I wake you?

Kyin: Hi, Mom. No, I’m awake. I’m just a little out of it—I have a cold, I think. A sore throat.

CHC: Oh, ok. Drink some tea and some orange juice, ok? Maybe you should see a doctor.

Kyin: I think I’m fine. I already had some tea and I think I’ll have some more soon. Why are you calling?

CHC: Oh, ok. I got another call from your brother. I know it was him.

Kyin: Oh. Ok, well what was he saying?

To the kitchen,
heating water.

CHC: I'm not sure. I think he said something about—he was telling one of his stories.

Kyin: What kind of story—what was it about?

CHC: Something about Kim Jong Il—North Korea. I dunno, it was confusing. You know how his stories are. He likes to talk.

Kyin: Yeah. So I guess he didn't say where he was?

CHC: No. You know, I have caller ID, but it just said nothing—"Unavailable."

Kyin: Yeah, ok. Figures. Well, I guess there's nothing we can do except wait and see if he calls again, right?

CHC: I think he'll call again.

Kyin: Yeah, I think so too. I think he'll probably keep calling. Just keep calling me when he calls you, ok Mom?

CHC: Ok. Where do you think he is?

Kyin: I don't know. I have no idea—I can't even guess. I mean, for a while I thought he went to Korea or something, but I mean, I don't know. He could be homeless living in DC for all I know.

CHC: No, I don't think so.

Kyin: Well, maybe we'll never know. I gotta go, Mom. Call me later.

CHC: Ok, bye

Reaching into her pocket—grabbing holding the stone.

Standing waiting.

Pouring water hot into a mug.

Carrying the mug to the couch.

Sitting sipping watching the screen—reading the captions.

Monday, February 8th

Clear, 17°

5:50 AM

A door slamming—keys jangling.

"What?"

Kyin sitting up, "Oh," she says.

To the window watching Cate come out into the street. Cate tossing a brown bag into the trash.

Then walking to a car—entering and driving up to Connecticut.

Dressing Kyin throwing on pants and shoes, a coat and scarf.

Down and out to the trash, sliding the bag under her coat.

Standing waiting.

6:01 AM

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—coming out across the street.

Nodding Kyin.

6:35 AM

Dropping the brown bag onto the coffee table.

To the kitchen making coffee.

8:03 AM

Down and up to Connecticut—down to Florida, grabbing a cab.

“Q Street Southeast,” says Kyin, “at the border with Maryland.”

8:40 AM

Coming down Pennsylvania to Alabama.

Onto Q Street.

8:54 AM

Standing taking photographs—a brick house with a white awning.

The car in the driveway.

Moving onto the lawn.

“Excuse me, miss?”

Kyin turning—a man in a suit.

“Can I help you?” he asks.

“Yes,” says Kyin, “I’m a reporter—I’m looking to interview the Councilman.”

The man pausing—nodding.

“Alright,” he says, “have you scheduled this meeting?”

“No,” says Kyin, “I haven’t—but I’m sure that once the Councilman sees what I want to discuss he’ll want to talk with me.”

The man pausing—nodding.

Then turning and entering the house.

9:28 AM

The man exiting the house, standing on the stoop—beckoning Kyin.

Kyin walking up the slight hill, up the concrete stairs.

“You can come in,” he says.

The two entering the house, standing in a hallway.

Wood wainscoting, a yellow lamp.

A woman walking toward Kyin.

"Hello," she says, holding out her hand.

The two shaking hands.

The woman wearing a smart suit blue.

"What is your name, again?" she asks.

"Helen Chang," says Kyin.

The woman nodding turning aside. "Nice to meet you, Ms. Chang. My name's Margaret—Maggie—I'm the Councilman's assistant. Let me show you to his home office, alright?"

Holding out her arm.

Nodding Kyin.

The two continuing down the hall to a door—opened—a room.

The woman walking whispering to the Councilman.

The Councilman sitting then standing smiling.

"Hello—Ms. Chang, is it? So nice to meet you. You caught me just in time, I'm off to meet with a few developers today—we're discussing plans for Shipley Terrace—you know the area?"

Nodding Kyin.

The Councilman nodding smiling to a chair.

Sitting Kyin reaching into her bag for a notebook, a pen, a recorder.

The Councilman nodding to Margaret—Maggie exiting, closing the door.

The Councilman then sitting across from Kyin, crossing his right leg over his left.

"Do you mind if I record you?" asks Kyin.

The Councilman shaking his head. "Of course not," he says, he smiles.

Leaning back looking at the ceiling. Elbows on the arms of his chair—fingertips touching.

"Yes," he says, "I believe that the key toward revitalizing this city—especially this part of the city—is a partnership between business and government. We need to tell those businesses that are willing to help our city that we are willing to help them. If you look downtown—my God, twenty years ago it was a mess over there—not too far from the Capitol. And what is it now? It's booming—businesses everywhere. Because we realized that the only way to move this city forward was through business partnerships. Public-private ventures."

The Councilman smiling pausing.

“You mean BIDs—the New Communities Initiative,” says Kyin.

The Councilman nodding grinning. “Yes—exactly!” he says. “See—you already know what I mean. Twenty years ago, no one in this city would have any idea what a *Business Improvement District* was. But today? That’s progress. That’s what it takes to make a city go forward.

“Do you come to this side of the river often, Ms. Chang?”

Nodding Kyin. “A few times a month,” she says.

The Councilman nodding. “Well, that’s good,” he says. “Most people in our city forget about this part of the city. They forget that across the river is DC, too. But I don’t forget. This part of the city may be rundown, but it’s growing. With the help of corporations, we’ll be able to transform this part of the city into an area that people will want to move to. You think I’m crazy, right? They said the same thing about downtown twenty years ago, about—just look at U Street! The center of the riots! My God, that place is booming with young professionals and new urban development. Well, we can do the same thing over here.”

Writing Kyin.

The Councilman watching her writing.

“See, what I’m doing today,” he says, he leans, “is—well, have you ever been to Barry Farms, to Shipley Terrace?”

Nodding Kyin.

“Good,” he says—leaning back, touching his palms together, his fingers.

“If you’ve been there, then you might know that these areas need to be fixed. They were bad areas when they were built, and they’re bad still. What happened was, the government decided that—back then, they decided that the best way to help people was to build housing for them. The projects. Well, we know now that that was a failed social experiment. Now we know that that didn’t work. So, what I’m doing, and what the mayor’s doing, we’re trying to get rid of these projects. We know now that the government can’t do it alone. We need the help of businesses—*Social Community Partners*. Because, that way, they can set up not just a new housing project, but instead an area where people of many different classes and races will want to live. A place with restaurants and stores and movie theaters instead of liquor stores and used car lots and gas stations.

“Look around here, Ms. Chang—drive around one day. How many grocery stores, how many restaurants do you see around here? You could probably count them on one hand. The number of restaurants and grocery stores across the Anacostia River—all of this vast area, all of these neighborhoods combined, that’s about the same number of restaurants and grocery stores in the small neighborhood of Dupont Circle. Half that.

“So what does that tell you? Dupont Circle—the Golden Triangle—that’s a business district. B-I-Ds. It’s because of BIDs that those areas across the river are thriving and our area over here, across that River, is going down.”

The Councilman stopping—smiling at Kyin.

Tapping his foot.

“What paper do you work for?” he asks.

“Oh,” says Kyin, reaching into her bag.

“I actually don’t work for a paper—

“I’m here,” she says, handing him a photograph, “to blackmail you.”

11:30 AM

Coming across Quarles toward Douglas.

Knocking.

Malika answering. “Oh, hey,” she says smiling, “what’re you doing here, Energy?”

The two entering the apartment.

“I was just in the area,” says Kyin.

The two heading to the kitchen.

“Do you have any tea?” asks Kyin. “I have a cold.”

Malika looking through the cabinets. “No, I don’t think so,” she says.

“But I do have some cough medicine,” she says.

“Alright,” says Kyin.

Malika reaching handing Kyin the medicine.

Kyin pouring swallowing.

Malika leaning against the counter.

“Thanks,” says Kyin.

“I’m here,” she says, sniffing, “because—when I was going through your photographs, I noticed one had a picture of a Councilman—and he was smoking crack.”

Malika taking her hands off the counter, saying, “What?”

Nodding Kyin. "Yep. So I went to his house this morning and recruited him. He's a node now. One of us."

"No you didn't."

Nodding smiling Kyin. "Yep—I did. Fucking," shaking her head, "he couldn't believe it."

Coughing Kyin.

The two moving to the living room—the couch.

"And what a goddamn windbag he is, too," says Kyin, coughing, "Loves to hear himself talk."

Nodding Malika.

Coughing Kyin. "I'm sorry to bother you," she says, "is this a bad time?"

Malika shaking her head. "No—I'm happy to see you. I just was getting ready to go check in with some of my nodes, but I still have time—an hour or so."

Nodding coughing Kyin. "Good," she says.

"So," she says, "I came here, too, because I wanted to see if you could help me with this guy. See if we can both sort of run him together, keep an eye on him."

"Alright," says Malika. "Where's his house, again?"

Kyin reaching into her bag—handing Malika a sheet of paper.

"Here," she says, "it's right near Fort Davis Park."

Nodding Malika. "Oh—right," she says.

Coughing Kyin.

"So," says Kyin, "what he'll be doing—mostly—is he's bringing us money. He'll bring us Council money—you know, earmarks. Basically, it's free money—for him and for us. The deal I made with him was—'You give us one-hundred forty grand a year, and we'll leave you alone.' But I also told him," coughing, "that he can't try to stop us from stopping BIDs and all that crap. And, I also told him, that if he gets us another councilmember, then I'll cut it in down—make it one-hundred grand a year instead."

"One-hundred forty grand?"

Nodding coughing Kyin. "Yes," she says. "To start."

Laughing coughing Kyin. "The funny part," she says, "is that it wasn't that hard to convince him—I mean, it was like nothing to him. Hell, it's not his money anyway. It's appropriations—city money. It's like he gives money like this away all the time—like it was nothing."

Malika shaking her head. "Crazy," she says.

Nodding coughing Kyin. “Yep,” she says. “And after he agreed, he just went right on talking and talking about something else—just couldn’t stop spouting nonsense. Like we’d just made a regular everyday business deal.”

Coughing Kyin—standing walking to the kitchen for water cold.

Malika following.

Drinking Kyin—pouring another glass.

“He’s over in Shipley Terrace today,” she says, “giving these development corporations a tour of the place—wants to tear it all down, just like Park Morton and Sursum.”

Nodding Malika watching Kyin.

“Why don’t you lay down?” she asks. “You don’t look so good.”

Coughing Kyin looking at Malika.

“I know,” she says, “I feel like death.”

Saturday, February 13th

Sunny, 34°

8:17 AM

Down, down, down.

Redline train, Glenmont.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

Into the train, sliding into a seat.

Cracking open a book—reading.

The humming knocking train on the tracks.

8:49 AM

Down and out to the bus.

Coming up 355 to Germantown.

9:22 AM

Knocking entering the house.

Coughing Kyin. “Hello?” she calls.

Again, “Hello?”

Into the kitchen for water cold. Through the medicine cabinet—pouring swallowing medicine.

Making tea.

9:36 AM

To the living room.

“Mom—are you here?”

To the couch, the endtable—the answering machine.

Pressing play. Scanning through the messages.

Stopping the tape—rewinding—pressing play.

Sipping tea.

I'm having headaches more and more often.

I came to Korea to enlist in the military. To serve my two years before my 30th birthday. But it was too much of a hassle dealing with all the paperwork, trying to become a citizen.

I spent a lot of time walking around this huge city, Seoul, getting lost.

Most people here, they can tell that I'm from the US—maybe it's my accent? So they treat me differently. When I ask them about North Korea, the first thing they say is, “Oh, you're from the US.” Then they act as if I think I'm better than them. I'm getting used to that response.

I suppose what they're saying is, “That may a big concern to you in the US, but it's not something we think about here day to day.”

Or, at least, that's what I've imagined their thoughts to be.

Me, I can't stop thinking about the North. But you know that.

The tape clicking—stopped.

Moving onto her side on the couch, the cushions.

Dozing.

2:22 PM

A noise from the kitchen.

Standing walking toward the sound.

Her mother standing washing.

“Hey, Mom,” she says.

“Oh,” says her mother, turning, “you're awake. Are you feeling ok?”

Shrugging Kyung pouring a glass of water cold—drinking.

Her mother watching her drinking. “Did you listen to the machine?” she asks.

Nodding Kyin pouring another glass.

"He sounds fine to me—same old, same old," she says.

"Yes," says her smiling mother. "He was always thinking about North Korea, wasn't he?"

Nodding drinking Kyin.

"Since we were kids," she says.

"But it doesn't matter anyway," she says, looking at her mother.

"It never did," she says.

7:16 PM

Coming across Duke Ellington.

Into the building—the elevator—the hall.

Knocking—Cate opening the door—"Hey," she says.

"Hey," says Kyin.

Monday, February 22nd

Light snow, 27°

5:58 AM

Her hooded head puffing white smoke blue.

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—rocking on his feet.

The two standing smoking.

A car passing sloshing wet snow up onto the sidewalk.

6:39 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:41 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

I've been researching Dad's work as an agent. He was not working directly for the North—it was more that he was working against the South, against the US. He'd grown tired of what he saw as the US control of our country—a kind of de facto colonization/dictatorship. So he began spying against various government agencies. At first, he would just follow people around, taking pictures. This was all after Park's assassination and the Gwangju Massacre. The entire country was suspicious of the government—most ordinary citizens were convinced that the government was constantly conspiring against the people.

Email Inbox, 6:56 AM

From: Ian

Assassinating the president was a KCIA conspiracy—the Gwangju killings—then covering them up, that, too was a government conspiracy. So Dad was no different from an ordinary South Korean in his point of view—except for the fact that Dad, in his anger, decided to do something—to take action.

I'm still in the midst of finding out what exactly that meant, but I do suspect that he was involved in an assassination attempt on President Chun in Burma. This was before Burma became friends with North Korea—they've only recently patched things up. Chun was visiting with a Burmese minister when a bomb went off.

For the most part, though, from what I can tell, Dad just went around following people that worked for government agencies taking pictures—especially people that worked for the Korean CIA, but also for US agencies. At the time, the US NSA was doing as much work in Korea as the US CIA. Both agencies were working with the young country. These US agencies took the South Korean government under their wing—training them how to do things their way. Chun Doo Hwan, before he was president, was the head of the Korean CIA/NSA—called KCIA.

I've found piles of photographs that Dad took—rolls and rolls of undeveloped film, stacks of cardboard negatives. I've only gotten about a third of the way through these things. So far, as I've said, it's just pictures of people doing ordinary things—shopping, driving, eating, sleeping, walking. As you look at these photographs, each one sort of tells a story of a person. So, for example, there'll be 100 photographs of a woman. The woman will be walking somewhere, then going home—then a photograph through the window of the woman sleeping—then the woman on the subway, sitting reading—then the woman entering a building. When you look at 100 photographs of the same person doing mundane things, you feel as if you've come to know them, as if you know the routine activities of their life—what they do day-to-day. You know them through their actions. When I'm looking at those 100 pictures of that woman, or of a different woman, or of a man, I gradually start to feel as if I know what they're thinking.

Then, suddenly—I'll realize that this person I'm looking at works for the KCIA or the NSA or the CIA. About half of the photographs are of Koreans, and the other half are of—

Kyin stopping reading—closing the email.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights*.

Looking over the streets.

1:29 PM

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 1:29 PM

I've installed two new sets of cameras in the neighborhoods of Washington Highlands and Columbia Heights. I did this partly because I was growing bored with Trinidad and Barry Farm—nothing much has been going on there, probably because of the cold weather. But I did it also because I've noticed from the police blotter that the murder rate has been going up in Columbia Heights—especially around the area of 14th and Girard Streets. So I've got a few cameras around there. There are a number of things going on around this intersection—a park, a coffee shop, an apartment complex, and there's also a crew named after this intersection.

Washington Highlands is a neighborhood I'm not too familiar with.

I was looking over crime statistics and old police blotters, and I noticed that it usually has one of the highest crime rates in the District. It's a large neighborhood with gradually rising hills and lots of long brick buildings. Actually, it has the most long brick buildings I've seen of any neighborhood. It's right along the back edge of the DC/Maryland border. Very quiet when I was there.

I spent the last couple hours watching these two neighborhoods. Both are pretty quiet—not much going on. Cars passing, people walking, that kind of thing. Washington Highlands—it has sort of a rural feel to it. Not quite country exactly, but close to it. 14th and Girard is more city—14th Street is a busy road with cars constantly going up and down—a road almost as busy as 16th Street. People go in and out of the coffee/doughnut shop. Sometimes a homeless guy will stand there for a couple hours.

I'll have to spend more time watching these neighborhoods—the Highlands especially is very unfamiliar to me. 14th and Girard is not too far from where Fiela and Tisha live, so it's not too unfamiliar, yet it still has a completely different feel than the section of Columbia Heights where they live.

Ian sent me an email—this my first direct communication with him in who knows how long. But it's not coming out of nowhere—he's left a few messages on Mom's machine.

Of course, he has more theories about "Dad the spy". Dad the terrorist? Dad working against the evil Korean CIA, the evil Chun Doo Hwan. I've already covered that story. Dad following people around and taking pictures.

Still, it's nice to hear from him—to know for certain that he's doing ok.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Standing pulling on shoes, a jacket—packing her bag.

Down and up to Columbia.

2:08 PM

Standing talking with a homeless man.

“No,” she says, “that’s not the way it works. I only trust you once. Last time I gave you money and—the deal was, when I come see you again, one of two things happen: either you give me photographs and information and I give you more money, or you give me nothing and I give you nothing.”

The man closing his eyes. “I need a little more,” he says. “And I lost that camera you gave me.”

Looking at him—reaching into her pocket for change—handing him the change.

“Here,” she says. “This is the last.”

The man taking the change. “Bless you,” he says.

Nodding Kyin walking toward Euclid.

2:28 PM

Coming into Malcolm X.

A man sleeping on a bench—tapping his shoulder, his arm.

The man waking, “What—who is it?” he asks.

Kyin bending down. “My name’s Energy,” she says. “Do you remember me?”

The man pulling down the blanket—sitting up, looking at Kyin.

“Camera lady,” he says.

“Yes,” she says, she smiles, “that’s me.”

The man nodding, reaching under his blanket—pulling out three rolls of film.

“Here,” he says, “that’s all I got.”

Handing the film to Kyin.

“And I need two more cameras for my friends Josh and Freddy.”

Nodding smiling Kyin—reaching into her bag—pulling out film, cameras, cash.

“That’s great work,” she says.

Handing him the cameras, the film, the cash.

“I need to find more like you,” she says.

The man nodding, laying back onto the bench—pulling the blanket tight.

“Kamsahamnida!” he says.

Leaning Kyin—biting her cheek. “What?” she asks.

The man smiling. "Did I say it right?" he asks.

Staring Kyin.

"Yes," she says. "You just surprised me."

"Who taught you that?" she asks.

The man smiling. "I knew you were Korean!" he says. "I can tell, you know. Koreans aren't like Japanese, they—"

Nodding Kyin. "Sure you can," she says. "Who taught you how to say that?"

The man nodding smiling—turning pulling the blanket over his head.

3:10 PM

Down 16th—across P Street into Dupont.

Circling the benches—tapping shoulders.

Kyin leaning sitting talking to men sleeping.

Exchanging cash and cameras for film.

4:04 PM

Down Massachusetts to Mount Vernon.

Around the square—benches—sandy dirt.

Kyin talking to men and women sitting with baskets and carts—bags and blankets.

Exchanging cash and cameras for film.

4:45 PM

Coming down New York to 15th Street.

Down 15th to the monuments, the Mall.

Men and women walking pushing carts—shaking cups of change.

Kyin walking talking—exchanging cash and cameras for film.

6:12 PM

Coming into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Making tea.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the screen.

Sitting sipping watching the images.

Thursday, February 25th

Light snow, 24°

6:36 AM

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Sitting sipping clicking open her blog.

Blog, 6:38 AM

I was feeling pretty good about things—a growing number of nodes: neighborhood nodes, police nodes, and nomads (homeless).

But, sitting on the couch thinking last night—sometimes, well, recently it's been more often than just sometimes, it's been most of the time, I've been lying on my side, so that my deaf ear is facing up. With my hearing ear pressed against the couch, it feels as if I really am completely deaf. I can't hear anything—it's completely soundless.

That—it's one of my favorite feelings. So I've been doing it more and more often—without planning to, of course—it just sort of happens near the end of each night. And, laying that way—without sound—helps me to think. Last night, then, I started thinking—as I often do—about where this is all going. And, suddenly, last night, I felt as if we have such a long way ahead.

Yes, we have a high number of nodes—over 550 in DC, and over 300 in Washington/Oregon. But those numbers feel miniscule in comparison to the total population. DC has a population of somewhere around 600,000. And if you add the people that work here, the commuters—The Federal City, The People That Actually Control the City (symbolic people), then...

Yes—we're growing fast—but not fast enough. If we want to infect the entire population—or most of it—then we need to move faster than the population is growing. Much faster.

Young men, young men, young men.

What do we need? To get into schools?

I was thinking about this for so long last night—I'm not sure how to get started.

Somehow—to find a way in.

Searching—"DC police chief," "DC police chief address," "DC Public Schools chancellor," "DCPS chancellor address."

Searches, reads, refines.

Searching—"DC mayor," "DC mayor home address," "list of DC councilmen and women," "DC council Ward 1," "DC council Ward 2," "DC Council Ward 3," "DC Council Ward 4," "DC Council Ward 5," "DC Council Ward 6," "DC Council Ward 7," "DC Council Ward 8," "DC Council home addresses," "DC Council office."

Searches, reads, refines.

Grabbing a notebook from the table—writing addresses.

9:13 AM

Down and up to Connecticut—crossing Taft Bridge.

Grabbing a cab.

“49th and—hold on,” says Kyin—reaching grabbing her notebook, flipping through the pages.

“Butterworth?” she asks, looking at the driver.

The driver nodding—pausing—grabbing his chin.

“Just take me up Mass Ave,” says Kyin.

The driver nodding—pulling out.

9:23 AM

Down Butterworth—thick foliage—expensive cars—brick-lined sidewalks.

Wide walks dense with trees—crisp-cut lawns lightly dusted.

Stately houses—5202 Butterworth Street.

Kyin pushing through the hedges, under branches bent, onto the back lawn. A tall brick house with curved stained-glass windows—mansard—slate—deck.

Shooting through the windows—the drawing room, the living room, the den, the kitchen.

Moving around to the East side of the house—the foyer, a bathroom, a study. Children’s books and old paintings—portraits.

Clicking pictures.

10:44 AM

Grabbing a cab.

“Macomb and Wisconsin.”

11:01 AM

Coming down Macomb—down 38th Street.

Trees and cars—lawns with hills and stairs leading to large houses covered by trees and hedges.

Kyin climbing up brick stairs—walking across the lawn around back.

Shooting through windows—the kitchen, the living room, a bathroom.

Moving around to the West side of the house—the sun room, a bathroom, a hallway.

11:39 AM

Grabbing a cab.

“Alton and 36th.”

11:47 AM

Coming down 36th.

Shooting.

12:29 PM

Grabbing a cab.

“Chesterfield Place.”

12:36 PM

Coming up Chesterfield.

Light raining through the leaves.

Shooting.

1:08 PM

Grabbing a cab.

“17th and Decatur.”

1:19 PM

Coming down 17th.

Shooting.

1:47 PM

Grabbing a cab.

“14th and Pennsylvania.”

2:00 PM

Coming down Pennsylvania.

The wide avenue—wide sidewalks—massive buildings.

Entering Kyin.

Guards sitting and standing next to a metal detector, a gate.

“Bags—any bags, please,” they say, they call out.

Handing a woman her bag. The woman searching through the bag—then handing it back to Kyin.

“Excuse me,” says Kyin, “Hi—my name’s Helen Chang—I’m a reporter? I’m looking for the DC Council—for the room where they hold their meetings?”

The woman turning pointing. “You’ll have to check the schedule over there, but they’re usually in either Room 412, 500, or 120.”

Nodding Kyin. “Thanks,” she says.

Marble—brass—iron.

Clacking heels and voices—coughs—echoes.

2:44 PM

From the elevator—into the councilroom.

A group—Councilmembers—sitting at a dais. Microphones and folders and assistants.

Chairs—tables lined opposite the dais. A man and a woman sitting at the table facing the councilmembers.

Kyin moves through the rows of chairs—finds a seat.

Sitting watching shooting.

5:12 PM

The gavel sounds.

The council gathering notebooks and folders. Assistants standing stretching.

Members moving out and down the hall.

Following Kyin.

7:12 PM

Kyin sitting waiting inside a cab.

A councilmember coming walking—down toward her sedan.

“That’s her,” says Kyin—shooting pictures.

The cab driver nodding.

Following the sedan.

7:33 PM

Up 16th—right on Jonquil.

“Here,” says Kyin.

Exiting—paying.

Down Jonquil.

7:44 PM

The sedan in the driveway.

Moving off the sidewalk—through hedges—around to the backside of the house.

Shooting.

Moving looking through the window—shooting.

A man, a woman, a child—sitting eating.

Shooting Kyin.

8:01 PM

The group moving to the living room—watching television.

Clicking pictures.

9:19 PM

Coming down Connecticut—across Taft Bridge.

Into the building—checking her mail.

Into the elevator—the hallway—the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on—mutes—CCs the screen.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Grabbing her camera—connecting—uploading photographs.

Looking over the images.

11:03 PM

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 11:03 PM

Maybe—hopefully—something accomplished today.

A stepping stone—heuristic.

I visited each of the councilmembers's homes (except for the Councilmember that's already been recruited), the DC Public School Chancellor's house, and the DC Chief of Police's house.

Looking over the pictures, I've got at least a feel for these places.

The next step is to put a camera inside each of these houses.

I plan on doing this by the end of the week.

Looking again at the photographs.

12:05 AM

Carrying the computer to the desk.

Laying on the couch on her side.

Dozing—sleeping.

Sunday, February 28th

Snow, 20°

9:19 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights.*

The streets soft white silence.

11:39 AM

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 1.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 2.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 3.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 4.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 5.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 6.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 7.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPS Chancellor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DC Mayor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DC Police Chief.*

Looking over the rooms—homes—hearths.

Warm rooms on a cold day.

5:32 PM

Grabbing her phone—placing a call.

Cell, 5:32 PM

Voice: Hello?

Kyin: Hello, can I speak to the councilman please?

Voice: May I ask who is speaking?

Kyin: This is Ms. Chang.

Voice: Thank you; one moment, please.

[Councilman, Ward 8]: Hello?

Kyin: Hi—this is Energy.

W8: Oh, Energy. You know, when we first met you told me your name was Ms. Chang.

Kyin: That I did. I'm just calling to check in, see if you have anything for us.

W8: Do I have anything for you. Well, let me see here. Ok, I'm looking here at correspondence from several development corporations, and it looks like the New Communities Initiative in Shipley Terrace is on hold. Seems they're all a bit hesitant now what with—they're all waiting to see how the first NCI works out—in Park Morton.

Cell, 5:37

Kyin: Ok. So, they're not giving up—they're just waiting.

W8: If you like. Now, Ms. Energy, I feel I should ask you, just what are you trying to accomplish here? Because if your goal is to try and help the community, well then you and I have the same goal. If you look at those parts of the city that are the most successful, they are the same areas that are open to things like the NCIs and BIDs.

Kyin: Have you recruited any other councilmembers?

W8: Well, that—I'm working on that. I may as well tell you that, yes, I know some things about another, about—well, alright, Ms. Energy, just to be clear here, the deal is that if I find you another Councilperson, then I—then next year my amount is down to one-twenty—is that correct?

Kyin: Yes.

W8: Ok, well, what I want to ask you is, what if I'm able to bring you more than one of my esteemed colleagues? How about that?

Kyin: The more you bring in, the more we lower your amount. You don't have to wait until the end of the fiscal year or anything like that. We'll return money each time you recruit a new Councilmember.

W8: Good! That's exactly what I wanted to hear.

Kyin: Now, Mr. Councilman—there are other ways that we'll take money off for you. If, for example, you were to establish after-school programs—for each Ward that you did this for, we'd take off Five-grand.

W8: Wait—hold on, let me write this down. Five grand off for every Ward after-school program.

Kyin: Free programs. These should be free to the kids.

W8: Free—right, of course. So, five grand for that, and then twenty-grand for each councilmember.

Kyin: Correct.

W8: Well, alright then! This sounds like something I can work with! And you said that, if I get down to nothing, then all I have to do for you is maybe things like some kind of work training program, things like that, correct?

Kyin: Correct.

W8: Ok! This is sounding better and better. Well, I must say, Ms. Chang—Energy, you're not as—I'm ashamed to admit, that after our first meeting I was convinced you'd be a difficult women to deal with—but this is working out just fine.

Cell, 5:49 PM

Kyin: Ok, so I'll call you in a week or so.

W8: Alright—goodbye, Ms. Chang—Energy. I do think, just to prepare you, that within a few months you will be returning me some of my initial investment.

Kyin: That's good news.

W8: Good news, indeed! Alright—until then—it's been a pleasure!

Kyin: Peace.

Carrying the computer to the desk.

6:11 PM

Down and up to Columbia—slick sidewalks.

Snow dropping down from evergreens, dusting the macadam.

The quiet park—streets—stores.

Kyin pulling the scarf tight, lowering her chin into her coat.

Kimhap Restaurant—looking over the menu. Ordering chigae, tea.

Sitting eating looking out on the street.

A bus stopping—passengers exiting, lowering their heads into the wind.

The bus continuing—passing a cab turning left.

A woman and child walking in puffed coats pink.

A dog following behind.

6:51 PM

Coming into the apartment—the ringing phone.

Answering.

Cell, 6:51 PM

Kyin: Hello?

Fiela: Hey—what's up?

Kyin: Hey—how are you? Been a while.

Fiela: Yeah—just seeing if you wanted to grab something to eat—you busy?

Kyin: Ah—I just ate. God, the snow makes it so beautiful out there doesn't it. It's like nobody's out there—it's empty.

Fiela: I know. So you already ate?

Kyin: Yeah. How's work? How's things?

Cell, 7:00 PM

Fiela: Work's good. Not much new going on with me.

Kyin: What about Tisha? Is she done taking classes?

Fiela: Tisha's good. No—she's got more classwork. She's taking more traditional classes now. That other stuff was driving her crazy. You know—she always came home angry at all those snobs. Now she feels like she's actually learning something that she can use.

Kyin: Good, good. That's good.

Fiela: What about you—anything new? Have you found a job yet?

Kyin: Oh—sort of, yeah. I'm doing fine, though, doing fine. Nothing much new with me either, though. Same old, same old. You know.

Fiela: Ok. Well, we should get together, have drinks.

Kyin: Yeah, ok—sounds good.

Fiela: Ok. Give me a call.

Kyin: Ok, peace.

Tossing the phone onto the couch.

Clicks on the screen. To the kitchen for tea.

News, 7:03 PM

Female Anchor: Also in the news today, another suicide on the DC Metro system. This is the seventh Metro suicide already this year—this coming after last year had the highest number of DC Metro suicides ever. Earlier today, a young man jumped in front of an Orange Line train. Here's Joan with the story.

Female reporter: Another tragic suicide this year, this following the most DC Metro suicides in a single year. [cut to man standing with caption: "Metro Spokesman."] "It's very unfortunate, but there's really nothing we can do about it." [cut to reporter holding the microphone in front of a woman] "I didn't even know about it until I got off the train. I mean—I thought I felt something—like the train hit something—but it wasn't anything big. It wasn't until I got off that someone said a guy jumped." [cut to reporter holding the microphone in front of a man] "I mean, I'm not sure how they could stop people from doing this—could they put up some kind of railing? I don't think it would work." [cut to reporter holding a microphone in front of a man] "Man, these DC people are coldhearted—I'm just visiting here—I heard this one dude, he just said, 'Am I gonna be late now?' That's all you can say when someone's dead?" [cut to reporter] As you can see, people have mixed reactions about this upsurge of Metro suicides. The general consensus down here, though, is that there isn't much that Metro authorities can do to stop these tragedies. Back to you.

Female Anchor: Thanks, Joan. Up next, weather.

Clicking off the screen.

Moving onto her side—pressing her ear into the cushions.

Dozing—sleeping.

Saturday, March 6th

Foggy with light rain, 42°

10:17 AM

Climbing Columbia. Into a café—coffee black.

Across Euclid—Malcolm X.

Shooting pictures.

Gray city.



Down to a bench—pebbled concrete.
Looking over a notebook.
Grabbing—pulling out a book—reading.
Bending over the book.
Sipping—watching a passing jogger.
A man walking a dog.
Closing the book, her lids.

12:20 PM

A hand on her shoulder—waking seeing standing Lynn.
“Hey,” says Lynn.
Smiling Kyin. “Hey, Ocean,” she says. “You the first one here?”
Nodding sitting Lynn.
The two sitting quiet.
Fat flat-footed fog.

12:30 PM

Malika—*Sun*—coming down the path.
Followed by Officer Patrick Walker—*Iron*.
Then Charles—*Earth*.
The group exchanging greetings.

12:42 PM

Standing Kyin. “C’mon, then,” she says.

1:00 PM

Into the building—the elevator—the hallway.
Into the apartment.
Into the kitchen for water cold. Kyin making coffee.
Ordering food.
Lynn looking at the painting. “Did you do this?” she asks.
“No,” says Kyin.
“My brother,” she says.
The others turning to look.
Lines—points—circles.

1:37 PM

The group eating pizza, drinking coffee.

Gathered around the coffee table—chairs, the couch.

Pictures—posterboard—notes spread out on the table.

Kyin holding up a picture: Patrick Walker—*Iron*—cuffing a man.

“What about this guy?” asks Kyin.

Lynn nodding. “Iron handed him off to me,” she says, chewing, “we recruited him—he’s ours. Name’s Smoke.”

Kyin writing the name under the photograph.

Malika pulling out a picture. “I know this guy,” she says. “He’s over in my area sometimes—hanging out.”

Nodding Lynn. “Yeah, I’ve seen him around—lives in Trinidad.”

Kyin grabbing the picture. “Oh, yeah,” she says, “I know him—I used to call him T-shirt.”

Lynn laughing. “‘T-shirt,’ huh?”

“Well,” says Kyin, “it makes more sense if you see him during the summer. Do we have anything on him?”

The group looking to each other.

“Ok,” says Kyin, looking to Patrick Walker. “There’s an Officer that works Trinidad—his name’s Jason Green—you know him?”

“Sure—vaguely,” says Patrick Walker, “but he’s a hardass. He’ll be difficult to recruit.”

Nodding Kyin. “I know,” she says, “but you’ll have to try. Last year he shot someone in Barry Farm—killed a kid. So use that against him. He’s got kids himself and he shot somebody else’s kid. Tell him we have photographs of the shooting. We need this guy. There was a shooting a while back near Montello in Trinidad, and I’m pretty sure T-shirt was either involved or knew about it. And I know Jason Green knows all about T-shirt, seeing as he works in Trinidad every night.”

Nodding Patrick Walker. “Yeah,” he says, “he knows him alright.”

“Right,” says Kyin, “so we need Green—to get to T-shirt. Because, I have a feeling that T-shirt runs Trinidad.”

4:49 PM

Standing stretching.

“We’re moving along,” says Kyin. “I’ll see you again next month. Things are gonna start picking up now that Winter’s passing.”

The group moving out—down and up to Columbia.

Each going their separate way.

Thursday, March 11th

Showers, 48°

5:50 AM

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—standing smoking.

Coming across the street—hooded Kyin with pocketed hands.

A car passing sheeting water onto the sidewalk.

6:12 AM

Into the apartment—to the kitchen for water cold.

Making coffee.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:15 AM

Male Anchor: And, in case you forgot, there's still a war going on in Afghanistan, with yesterday 30 US soldiers killed along with 17 Allied soldiers in a deadly Taliban raid.

Female Anchor: That's a tragedy. Also in the news, the Horse Virus death toll is climbing, not only in the US, but also abroad. A panel of FDA researchers is now questioning whether or not approval for the Horse Flu vaccine was moved through too quickly. Those same panelists are asserting that the vaccine did not do as well as they had hoped in preventing the Horse Flu outbreak, and that the vaccine may actually have made things worse.

Male Anchor: Ouch. Up next, traffic and weather.

Coughing sniffing.

Cracking an egg into a pan.

Coffee black.

Rice from the rice cooker. Sliding the egg onto the rice—gochujang.

Carrying the plate, the mug to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

6:39 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:39 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

Sure, we're making progress on the Hanford Nuclear Site. It's so crazy how weak security is there, so it's insanely easy for our nodes to just walk in and out of that place at our own will. The deal here, with Hanford is, I mean, it's crazy how big this damn thing is, and it's just shitloads of old plutonium and all this crap. I mean, those motherfuckers, they're leaking fucking radioactive shit into the river, and they've already killed who knows how many people. FUCKERS! I can't tell you how angry my eco-freak nodes get about this shit (I guess, deep down, I'm an eco-freak myself). Those fuckers build a bomb, kill tens of thousands of Japanese with it, and then they leave the waste from the bomb in our backyard, killing our world. Fuckers.

They have these rusty old containers for fucking plutonium stored next to a fucking river! So, you know, we've decided to fuck with it. To fuck with the NSA Yakima. They just let that Nuclear waste sit there. So fuck them, right? We are seriously going to fuck up those fucking NSA fuckers.

But, really, the reason I'm writing here, Energy, is because, I mean, I've got these people coming in like crazy. You wouldn't believe how many people I've recruited, it's probably somewhere around 1,000 people. Fucked up, right? And, like I said before, there's just so many, I don't know how many are serious about it and how many are just scoping things out. For all I know, some of these nodes could be FBI agents. So I'm careful.

Well, just hold on, it's, I mean, I was sitting here looking at this list of people the other day, and I was thinking of your term "un-group." That's a perfect way of describing these people, because they're not quite a group, yet neither are they not a group. They, all of these people are coming in, but they all have different ideas. Not only different political and social and philosophical ideas, but also, I mean, they all have a different idea of what should be going on.

So, I mean, I'm constantly having to look back on those writings you sent me, to remind myself that we want this, that we asked for it. Because sometimes it can be frustrating. All of these college kids spouting some old revolutionary or philosopher they read, I have to tell them, "Quit quoting books and think for yourself." But of course that's a dumb thing to say, as if the two were mutually exclusive.

So, yes, heuristic, stepping-stones.

Smash Jargons.

I guess the problem that I'm having is, how do we maintain? If we are not a group, if we are an "un-group," how do we coalesce?

But I don't want to end on a down note. Things are actually going pretty great. I've got tons of environmental people and even a few that have studied physics and computer science, things like that.

Email Inbox, 7:13 AM

I've got this one dude from Livermore, he knows so much shit it's scary. I can't even understand half of what he says. Yep, we'll fuck up those NSA fuckers, fuck them over with Hanford.

Darger

Email Inbox, 7:25 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

Today, I went to the DMZ. Panmunjom. Stood there and looked over into the North. They have this huge building sitting on the North Korean side.

Joint Security Area—Truce Village.

Men holding guns.

A fence.

Concrete.

North Korea looks like a beautiful country. Mountains.

Low flat buildings. A road.

I drove along the border—a long fence with razorwire.

Yeah, I know how you and Mom feel.

So what? You don't see what I see. Over there—across the border—The North—Koryo.

Brother Ian

Email Outbox, 7:35 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

Doing is knowing—knowing is doing. How do you “control” or “coalesce” an “un-group”?

You don't. You simply maintain homeostasis. Maintain the assemblage—the network.

Nodes—points and lines.

YOU MUST KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION—FEEDBACK—OPEN.

Email Outbox, 7:37 AM

To: Darger

I know it can be frustrating when you feel like you're juggling 12 different ideas, when people each think their idea should be first and foremost—but trust me, the way to work is just to work.

HEURISTIC—STEPPING-STONES.

These people were recruited—but they came to you. They want something—desire. Something is missing. So, they will be willing to push forward, to maintain the assemblage without a central command in order to fulfill that desire.

They don't yet know what that desire is. Darger, you are feeling frustrated, because you've been planning and planning and recruiting and recruiting. Trust me, when your un-group accomplishes something that you've planned, then you will stop worrying. Suddenly, the un-group will maintain. You will no longer hear suggestions as cries of dissonance.

DOING IS KNOWING.

When you fuck up Hanford—when you fuck up the NSA—each member of your un-group will feel like they have never felt before in their entire lives. It will bind them forever in a perfect assemblage of homeostasis. They will want to achieve something again.

Darger—one more thing—I feel that I have to remind you that our un-group is not loud. We are not rich kids and yuppies/yippies patting ourselves on the back for protests, then going home and fucking doing nothing.

WE ARE SILENT.

WE ARE INVISIBLE.

WE ARE A VIRUS.

When you fuck up Hanford, it needs to be unnoticeable by the people working there. They need to think that everything is as normal. And when you fuck up the NSA, they need to think that it's just something that happened—maybe nature caused it. The point is—REMAIN UNDETECTED.

Energy

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 1.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 2.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 3.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 4.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 5.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 6.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 7.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPS Chancellor.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DC Mayor.*
Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPD Chief.*

Looking over the streets—the rooms.

7:39 PM

Standing putting on shoes.

Out into the hallway—knocking.

Cate opening the door—“Hey,” she says.

“Hey,” says Kyin—moving into the room.

To the kitchen—pouring wine bordeaux in glasses two.

The two sitting drinking on the couch.

Cate leaning, tapping the glass. “You wanna watch something?”

“No,” says Kyin, shaking her head. “My eyes hurt—I’ve been staring at a screen for too long.”

Leaning back into the cushions—closing her lids.

Sipping breathing.

9:40 PM

“What?”

Kyin sitting up—looking.

Cate coming to the couch—kneeling.

“You fell asleep,” she says.

Kyin rubbing her cheeks, her lids.

“Damn,” she says.

Cate standing walking to the kitchen for water cold—to the couch, kneeling handing the glass to Kyin.

Drinking nodding Kyin.

“I’ve got a sleep-headache,” she says.

“A what?”

“A sleep-headache,” says Kyin.

Slow-standing Kyin walking to the kitchen—looking through the cabinets.

“Don’t you have any pills in here?”

Cate following behind—shaking her head. “No,” she says. “I don’t use pills. What’s a sleep-headache?”

Kyin drinking closing her eyes.

“A sleep-headache is a nasty headache that I sometimes get when I wake up.”

She rubs her head. “It feels like a nail stuck through my scalp—a lightning bolt. Do you have a hat?”

Cate points to a closet.

Nodding drinking Kyin. “Actually,” she says, “I think the headache is what forces me awake. Maybe I should call it an awake-headache.”

Shrugging walking to a closet—grabbing a ballcap—pulling it down over her eyes.

The two walking sitting on the couch.

Cate pulling in her legs. “Can I get you some pills?” she asks.

Nodding pointing Kyin. “Please,” she says. “In my kitchen—just grab the bottle on the counter. And some milk.”

Nodding standing Cate. To the kitchen for keys—exiting the apartment.

Then returning, bottle in hand. A glass of milk.

Handing the bottle to Kyin.

Kyin pouring tossing swallowing drinking.

Cate touching her wrist. “Do you need to take so many pills?” she asks.

Shrugging Kyin.

“Did I talk in my sleep?” she asks.

“A little,” says Cate.

Kyin slightly lifting her head.

“Whad’d I say?” she asks.

“You said something about ‘nodes’,” says Cate.

Shrugging sagging Kyin. “I don’t remember anything,” she says.

Turning away from the light. “I rarely remember my dreams,” she says. “Only during daytime naps.”

Quiet Cate.

Nodding Kyin. "Can you turn off the light?" she asks. "It's too bright."

Cate standing clicking off the lights.

Sitting pressing against Kyin.

Cate watching Kyin.

Dozing Kyin.

Tuesday, March 30th

Showers, 55°

8:19 AM

Sitting talking with the Councilman.

"I told you you'd owe me some money soon," he says, he laughs. "I warned you."

Nodding Kyin. "That, you did," she says.

Sliding a brown envelope across the table.

The Councilman grabbing folding the envelope into his breast pocket.

The waiter coming bringing plates hot—an omelet, eggs over easy.

"Where's my grapefruit juice?" asks the Councilman.

The waiter looking—"Oh—I'm sorry," he says, "I'll be right back."

The Councilman shaking his head, unfolding a napkin.

The Councilman puncturing the egg—yolk yellow on the plate pale.

"Now," he says, lifting the egg onto toast, "I'm warning you again. My next target is Mr. Mayor. If I get you the Mayor, I want it so that I owe you nothing."

The Councilman lifting the toast, the egg into his mouth.

Sipping Kyin watching him eat. "That sounds fair," she says.

"At least," she says, "as far as money is concerned. We'll still want appropriate action and inaction from you."

The chewing Councilman.

The Councilman eating nodding—egg yellow on his chin.

"Of course," he says.

Nodding Kyin looking down at her plate.

8:44 AM

"A pleasure," says the Councilman, holding out his hand.

Shaking hands with Kyin.

“Ok,” says Kyin. “I’ll call you in a week or so.”

The nodding smiling Councilman. “You just do me a favor,” he says, “make sure you say hello for me to my distinguished colleagues.”

The Councilman then dropping his hat onto his head, winking and exiting the diner.

11:04 AM

Coming into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

To the couch—napping.

4:17 PM

Standing dressing packing.

Down and up to Connecticut—to Florida.

Grabbing a cab.

“Freedom Plaza.”

4:40 PM

Sitting waiting outside on a bench.

A Councilwoman exiting the building talking to a man.

Then turning and waving, walking into a garage. Quick Kyin standing running behind.

“Ma’am,” she calls out.

The Councilwoman turning. “Yes?” she asks.

“Ma’am,” says stopping Kyin, “excuse me—thank you for stopping. I’m sorry to bother you like this—my name’s Helen Chang—I’m a reporter.”

The Councilwoman nodding furrowing her brows.

“Yes,” she says. “I’ve heard of you.”

Nodding Kyin. “Good,” she says, “perhaps you know what I’m here to ask?”

The Councilwoman nodding, turning to her car.

“Yes,” she says, “I suppose I do. And I know you’re no reporter.”

The Councilwoman opening her car door—looking back over her shoulder.

“Are you coming?” she asks.

Nodding Kyin moving around the car—stepping sliding into the passenger seat.

The two driving out onto 13th Street.

7:15 PM

Knocking Kyin.

A child slow opening the door. “Mom!” he yells.

"There's a lady at the door!"

The child standing holding the handle—looking at Kyin.

A woman coming to the door. "Yes?" she asks. "May I help you?"

Smiling Kyin. "I'm terribly sorry to bother you," she says. "I'm a reporter—I'm here to speak with your husband."

The woman grabbing her hipbone. "Oh," she says, "well—what's this—did something happen? Was there an accident?"

"No," says Kyin, "not exactly. I'm afraid I can't say exactly. This is a personal matter involving the Councilman."

The woman looking down at the child. "Go back inside," she says to the boy.

The boy turning running.

The woman looking up at Kyin. "A personal matter?"

Nodding Kyin. "I'm sorry," she says. "But it's quite urgent."

Soft—the woman slowly nodding.

"Alright," she says, turning to the side. "You'd better come in."

7:30 PM

Standing Kyin watching the door opening.

The Councilman entering the study, holding out his hand.

"Hello," he says, "I don't believe I've had the pleasure."

Kyin taking his hand. "Helen Chang," she says.

"Yes," says the Councilman—moving to a chair. "Please," he says, "have a seat."

Sitting Kyin.

The Councilman sucking in his lips. "What is it you're here about, Ms. Chang? My wife said that it was urgent."

Nodding Kyin reaching into her bag—grabbing a brown bag.

Opening the brown bag to reveal an envelope.

Handing the envelope to the Councilman.

The Councilman opening the envelope, looking through the photographs.

Quiet watching Kyin.

The Councilman slow studying each picture—raising it to his eyes—holding it out at arm's length.

Then looking up at Kyin.

“Alright,” says the Councilman. “I guess I can’t deny that that’s me. So what do you want? An exclusive interview or something?”

“No,” Kyin says.

Then reaches into her bag—handing another folder to the Councilman.

The Councilman looking over the papers—graphs and maps.

“What’s this?” he asks.

“That,” says Kyin, “is a series of charts showing the poverty level in your Ward. As you can see, it’s one of the poorest areas in the country.”

The Councilman looking again through the pages.

“What I want,” says Kyin, “is for that to change.”

The smiling Councilman. “Ms. Chang,” he says, he gestures, “I am one of the most proactive Council members you will ever meet. I am doing things every day to change the makeup of my Ward. Believe me, I care very much about these people.”

Nodding Kyin. “I’m sorry, Mr. Councilman,” she says. “I don’t speak bullshit. As you can see, your way of showing that you care hasn’t helped these people out of poverty. Now, what I want from you, within the next month, is a concrete plan for changing the poverty levels of your Ward. What I also want is—I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but your Ward has had a large number of burglaries lately—have you noticed this?”

“I’m sure I was to be briefed on that, yes,” he says.

Nodding Kyin—biting her cheek.

“Again, Mr. Councilman, I don’t speak bullshit. What I also need from you is a concrete plan to address these burglary problems. Ok?”

“Ms. Chang, I—”

“The correct response is ‘yes’,” says Kyin.

The Councilman leaning forward. “Ms. Chang—let’s get something straight here, ok? I am a Councilmember. I have more power than you could ever—”

“Esteemed Councilmember, if I may. I don’t know if perhaps the police or the media would be as lenient as I am being regarding your raping of little boys.”

Kyin leaning forward. “How would your wife feel about seeing a nicely framed picture of your cock in the ass of a boy your son’s age?”

The Councilman closing his mouth.

The slowly opening, “It wasn’t rape—it—”

“Before you say anything else,” says Kyin—reaching into her bag—pulling out a recorder, “I should warn you that you’re being recorded.”

The Councilman looking at the recorder.

The Councilman leaning back into his chair.

The Councilman looking at the floor.

“A plan for poverty within a month,” says Kyin, “and a plan addressing these burglaries within two weeks.”

The Councilman slow nodding.

“Good,” says Kyin. “Now, I have a few other things to address. Earmarks. You will be providing us with two-hundred thousand dollars a year in city aid. Before you try and say anything, I should warn you that I have direct access to your past appropriations, so I know that two-hundred thousand dollars should be fairly easy to achieve. In addition, you will vote against any legislation that favors either Business Improvement Districts or the New Communities Initiative.

“Mr. Councilman, are you getting all this?”

The Councilman holding his head. “You don’t understand,” he says.

“What don’t I understand?”

The Councilman looking up at Kyin. “Favoring these—I mean, these are the people that got me elected! How do you think I—where do you think my campaign contributions came from? I mean, these people, they expect to be able to build—they expect—how am I supposed to get reelected without their money?”

“I guess that’s something you’ll have to work out,” says Kyin. “Right now, that shouldn’t be your main concern.”

The Councilman holding his head.

“Ah, fuck,” he says.

Kyin reaching into her bag—handing the Councilman another folder.

“Another one?” he asks.

“No—don’t worry,” says Kyin. “This is just a list of everything I’ve mentioned. Now, Esteemed Mr. Councilman, I’d just like to mention one other thing: you are not in this alone. You are now part of a network. Included in this network are two other councilmembers.”

The Councilman raising his head. “What?” he asks.

Nodding Kyin. “Yes—so you will find them voting along with you on each of these issues. And not only them, Mr. Councilman, but also a growing number of police officers are part of this network. As of now, there are over thirteen thousand individuals in this city alone that are with us. So, I know this is difficult for you now, but I promise that over time it will grow easier.”

“Which other members?”

Kyin pointing to the folder. “Everything you need to know is in that folder,” she says, “including my number.”

Standing Kyin.

“Thank you for your time, Mr. Councilman. I’ll contact you in a week or so to see if you’re making any progress on those burglaries.”

The Councilman looking through the folder.

Nodding Kyin.

“Ok,” she says. “I’ll show myself out.”

9:10 PM

Coming into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Blog, 9:15 PM

Three Councilmembers.

Expected earmark income of 200 grand from Ward 4, 165 grand from Ward 5.

More later—I’m tired now.

Clicking open her blog.

Carrying the computer to the desk—shutting down.

To the couch—dozing.

Sleeping.

Friday, April 2nd

Showers, 52°

5:55 AM

Mr. Dixon—*Neighbor 44*—standing smoking.

Coming across the road, onto the sidewalk—standing Kyin.

Water sliding down the brim of her hat.

The blue and the white.

6:35 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:50 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

The weather's changing here in Korea. I'm thinking about the Korean military. Really, when you think about it—well, first, think about how wars used to work. World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War, the Vietnam War—for all of those wars, the troops, the army was just made up of ordinary citizens. War came, and the government told normal people that they had to fight. The draft. That's difficult for our generation to comprehend. For our wars—the Gulf, Afghanistan, Iraq—those wars have been fought by military people—a separate group of people that would still be in the military even if there was no war. No ordinary people have been called up to go and fight in those wars.

So, really, most of the US population knows nothing about how to fight war. Fighting war isn't as the same as it was during those old wars. Back then, all you did was pick up a gun and go. Now soldiers are hooked into technology. These are, more than ever, technological wars (though one could argue that war has always been technological). So, if there was today another World War, if ordinary Americans were called up, they would have no clue what to do. And most of them would be too overweight and out of shape.

Compare this to Korea. Korea is always in a state of readiness as regards war—the war has never officially ended.

Across the border, the North has always been, and continues to be, a looming threat. Most Southern Koreans are able to bracket this threat, separating it from their everyday lives.

They know that it is a looming threat, but day-to-day they don't think about it. It's not even in the back of their minds—it's deeper yet.

Yet every Korean male is required to undergo two years of military training. Think about that. What that means is that every single Korean male citizen is a military man lying dormant.

Brother een

Closing the email.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Dressed—down and up to Connecticut.

Grabbing a cab—“West Virginia and Florida.”

8:12 AM

Walking through Trinidad.

Coming up Montello.

Across on Oates.

Into Langston—across K Street.

Maryland Avenue.

8:40 AM

Smiling Lynn saying, “Hey, Energy,” she says.

Smiling Kyin saying, “Hey, Ocean,” she says.

9:01 AM

The group gathered.

Sorting photographs.

“Who’s this?” asks Kyin—holding up a photograph. “He looks familiar,” she says.

Malika taking the photograph. “I know him,” she says. “He’s bad news.”

“Bad news how?” asks Kyin.

“Cold killer,” says Malika. “He runs Barry Farms, I know that. All that whole area over there—back of MLK.”

Kyin taking the photograph. “Ok,” she says. “Where did—who took this? What node?”

Malika grabbing a notebook—flipping through the pages. “Orion,” she says. “That’s my lead node in Barry Farm.”

Nodding Kyin—looking around the group. “Ok,” she says, “we need to find out where he lives.”

Malika nodding writing.

9:25 AM

“No,” says Lynn, “I grew up in Petworth. Moved to Carver when I was in my twenties. My husband and I. Right next to the park, at first.”

“Your husband?” asks Charles. “What happened to him?”

Shrugging Lynn. “Pipe,” she says.

Nodding Charles. “Mm,” he says.

“Did you ever get into that?” asks Kyin.

“Who?” asks Lynn.

“Not me,” she says. “I didn’t need to—I could see everyone around me with it, could see what it was like. Zombies.”

Nodding Charles.

10:45 AM

“I’ve gotta go,” says Patrick Walker.

Nodding standing walking Kyin. “Hold on,” she says—reaching into her bag.

Pulling out a stack of envelopes. “We’ve got the first payment from our Ward 4 Councilmember,” she says.

Placing the envelopes onto the table.

The groupmembers each taking up an envelope.

12:20 PM

Dressing standing Kyin. Lifting the strap of her bag over her head.

Stretching.

“Thanks, again,” she says, hugging Lynn.

Nodding hugging Lynn. “Of course,” she says.

“My place next month,” says Kyin.

“Ok,” says Lynn.

2:07 PM

Coming into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water –pills swallowed.To the couch, rubbing her head.

Closing her lids—dozing.

Friday, May 7th

10:55 AM

Showers, 57°

“Hold on,” says Kyin—reaching into her bag.

Then dropping a stack of envelopes onto the table.

“Our esteemed colleague, the Councilmember from Ward 5, has made her first donation.”

The others smiling gathering the envelopes.

1:20 PM

“Ok,” says Lynn. “I guess I’ll talk to you when I talk to you.”

Nodding Kyin.

Turning and walking down Columbia.

1:35 PM

Ordering coffee black.

1:50 PM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 1:50 PM

From: Fiela

Kyin,

So, what now? Are we not friends anymore?

I miss you.

I feel like I haven’t seen you in forever.

Are we officially drifting apart? [Cue sad music]

Fiela

Thursday, May 20th

Sunny, 62°

7:20 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email.

Email Inbox, 7:20 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

We’ve begun contamination of the NSA/NAVY Yakima Firing Station using nuclear waste from the Hanford Nuclear Waste Site.

This has been a learning process for me. Before we began this project, I knew next to nothing about nuclear waste.

Email Inbox, 7:22 AM

From: Darger

All I knew was—was that it could be harmful, to say the least. Well, ok, so now I have this crew of physics students, grad students, and people working out in the world—from UWash, UOregon, Berkeley, Stanford, Livermore—and these nodes, they know quite a bit about how to handle this stuff.

You can't just walk up to a rod of spent nuclear fuel and grab it with your bare hand. Energy, this stuff is going to seriously fuck up these NSA folks. I mean, it will—if they ever have kids, those kids could be mutated. Stuff like that.

Collateral damage.

The same with the military folks training there. I really don't have anything against them. Though a large number of nodes here hate these military people. The Firing Station is where they train soldiers to fight in those never-ending wars. Remember those wars we started years and years ago? Those wars that still haven't ended? Well, this is one of the places where they train our soldiers. Our soldiers for those interminable wars.

Are they wars? Is that what we should call them?

Maybe we should come up with a new term. Because, to me, they don't seem like a war. I mean, WW1, WW2—those were wars.

Afghanistan, Iraq—I don't know what to call them. But calling them "war" doesn't seem an accurate description.

If a war does not have a concrete beginning and end, then how do we circumscribe it?

If you're wondering why I'm ranting about this, Energy, it's because I grew up in a poor town.

If you're poor, you go to war.

Rich kids don't go to war.

For me, it's as simple as that.

How many rich kids do you see going off to war? If they do, they're sure as hell not doing any fighting. All war is implicitly a class war.

The rich people send the poor people out to die.

That's why I've found your writings so compelling, Energy. I've always had this sort of deep-seated mistrust of rich people. And, while my own un-group is more focused on environmental issues, I still feel a connection to the work you're doing in DC.

I'll go through some of the specifics of what we've been doing.

The easiest way to maintain nuclear waste is to put it in water. Water keeps the waste cool, while at the same time creating a protective barrier. This is why you'll see most nuclear power plants located next to a body of water: 3-Mile Island, Calvert Cliffs (I want to talk about this location more with you later)—actually, the list is endless.

Email Inbox, 7:33 AM

From: Darger

Perhaps all nuclear reactors are located on bodies of water (I'll have to research this claim). Which, of course, leads inevitably to the question of contamination.

For most local communities that have a nuclear power plant, at some point in that plant's history there arises a question of contamination. Something happens—an "incident"—and the community begins to wonder about things. Yet these remain local problems. Hundreds of "local" nuclear waste problems. Our problem is that these "incidents" all remain localized.

Yet, these local problems go beyond nuclear facilities. They involve also Trichloroethylene (TCE) sites. These are the 44 sites where they used to make nuclear missiles—spread out all over the country. TCE was used to clean metal. Turns out, TCE is highly toxic—it takes years for effects to manifest. Birth defects, etc. Each of these sites leaks TCE into the groundwater, contaminating the local population, as well as the members of the military working at these sites.

Local, local, local.

Smash Jargons.

So, to transfer the waste, we use water. We wear lab outfits, we even use metal tongs.

We're very careful about all of this. I honestly don't know if you have to be this careful with this stuff, but my physics people have made me cautious.

We spend the day in Kennewick, where one of my nodes lives. Then, sometime in the night, we drive through Richland—cutting across 240 toward Yakima. Then, at 24, we head off, down the dirt roads, toward the bend in the river. This is the desert, Energy, the dry country, the part of Washington that no one ever sees.

Driving in the dark, down dirt roads.

We go in with barrels of water in the back of my truck. On some nights, they have these rent-a-cops walking around, so if we see them, we turn around.

But they're usually not there.

So we just drive in. We put on our suits—space suits with kitchen gloves—and head into this huge warehouse.

And, in the back of the warehouse, there they are—the rods. So we pull out our tongs, and, very carefully, we transfer the rods to the water-filled barrels in the back of my truck.

It's a slow process—purposefully so.

Email Inbox, 7:36 AM

From: Darger

After a couple hours, we've got a full barrel. We then spend at least a half hour making the barrel secure. Then, slowly, we drive back out onto the dirt roads. We follow the river, heading west, toward the Firing Center.

Back to 24—the Vernita Bridge Road on the right.

Onto Preist Rapids Road.

Along Columbia, the rushing river black in the night. I love that river!

The desert soon becomes rough mountains. So we're forced to slow down, wary of what's in our barrel. On some turns, we'll go as slow as 15 mph.

A slow process, driving through the mountains, the brush.

Until, suddenly, we're there. Well—to be clear, there is no “there” there. The Firing Center is a kind of wasteland of mountains and desert.

So, we've picked a few spots—we just sort of scatter the rods. Obviously, we can't head too far West for fear of running into the soldiers.

So, you get the idea anyway. Yakima is a kind of US translation of Afghanistan. Steppe—desert—mountains. I think what we're doing here, Energy, is a kind of translation of what you're doing there.

Local, local, local.

Smash jargons.

I'm finally getting what those words mean. We can't just follow what you're doing over there—instead, we needed to find our own thing, our own way of doing things. Most of my nodes agree that our local area's most pressing concerns are environmental.

Riding through that part of Washington at night, a barrel of nuclear waste in the back of the truck, heading toward the NSA—it's an amazing experience.

The Columbia River is something to see—huge cliffs—then, suddenly, these long, flat stretches of earth. So, it's night, and I'll just be thinking about it all.

This is where they chose to build the bomb that wiped out Nagasaki.

This is where they choose now to spy on us.

I hope things are going well with you, Energy. Knowing you're there brings me comfort. Thanks for letting me rant a little.

Reading your letters always makes me feel better. I pass them out to each of my nodes, asking them to offer their own thoughts. You can't know what your words mean to us.

Email Outbox, 7:55 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

Good work.

Local, local, local.

Smash all jargons.

Feedback. Create blogs—community blogs. Local newspapers. Community newspapers.

Control the media, control jargons.

Energy

Clicks on the news.

News, 8:07 AM

Male Anchor: Also in the news, a car bomb exploded in Sheridan Circle, killing a secretary working for the Embassy of the Ivory Coast. Her name has not been released. The US Secretary of State has expressed her condolences to the Ivory Coast.

Female Anchor: Also in the news, the CDC today reported today that it is likely that the entire population of the US has acquired the Horse flu in some form or another. CDC officials state that, whether you know it or not, you likely had a case of the virus.

Male Anchor: That's interesting, I didn't know that. Also, in local news, police reported to an area near 37th Street Southeast to find a man with gunshot wounds. The man was taken to a hospital and declared dead.

Female Anchor: That's a tragedy. Also in the news today, North Korea has exchanged fire with South Korean soldiers. The US Secretary of State issued a strong rebuke to the isolated state, saying, "The US will not accept a hostile North Korea."

Mutes—CCs the screen.

8:15 AM

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 1.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 2.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 3.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 4.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 5.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 6.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 7.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPS Chancellor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DC Mayor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPD Chief.*

Looking over the streets—the rooms.

4:44 PM

Standing stretching—pressing the heels of her palms against her lids, her sockets.

To the kitchen for water cold.

To the couch—pressing her ear against the cushion.

Closing her lids.

Dozing—sleeping.

Friday, May 21st

Clear, 50°

12:29 AM

“Huh?” says sitting Kyin.

“Oh,” she says.

Checking the time.

Slow standing.

To the kitchen, leaning into the refrigerator.

Grabbing—clicking open—drinking an energy drink.

Dressing, packing her bag.

Down and up to 18th Street. Into an empanada spot. Ordering taking an egg and onion empanada.

Back out onto 18th—grabbing a cab.

“MLK and Malcolm X,” she says.

Eating riding in the cab.

1:19 AM

Coming up Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue—pulling off onto Malcolm X Avenue.

Leaning Kyin paying the driver.

1:40 AM

Coming down Newcomb—past 5th Street—Lebaum.

Following the circle—trees on the right, houses on the left.

Short driveways with parked cars.

Rows of rectangles—squared stacked above a garage.

At the back side of the circle, Kyin cuts between two stacks of houses.

Following the sidewalk toward the center of the circle.

2:11 AM

Into the circle, coming to a telephone pole.

From her bag—cleats, a strap.

Hooking the cleats over her sneakers—stepping into the strap.

Then climbing the pole.

At the top, Kyin leans back against the strap.

Then digs through her bag—pulling out a camera, a screwgun, screws.

Holding the camera against the pole—then screwing in the screws.

Into her bag, pulling out a cable—connecting the cable to camera.

Again into her bag, pulling out pliers—prying open the box.

Then splicing the cable.

From the bag—a DVR recorder, a metal box.

Screwing the metal box to the pole. Then fastening the recorder inside the box.

Then connecting the camera to the recorder.

Then splicing the recorder to the cable box.

Then closing the box.

Then coming down the pole.

5:50 AM

Coming up Connecticut.

Down to the apartment building—the trashcan, the brown bag.

Sliding the bag into her jacket.

5:58 AM

Mr. Dixon coming out across the road.

Standing smoking.

6:20 AM

Into the apartment—tossing the bag onto the coffee table.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Cameras—activate.*

Clicking—*add new camera.*

Clicking—*neighborhood camera.*

Typing—*Congress Heights.*

Clicking open—*Cameras—Neighborhoods—Congress Heights.*

Zooming—panning—tilting.

Looking over the neighborhood.

Friday, May 28th

Light rain, 54°

5:58 AM

Mr. Dixon coming across the road—nodding.

Standing smoking.

A sedan passing.

6:21 AM

Into the apartment—tossing the bag onto the coffee table.

Clicks on the local news.

News, 6:21 AM

Female Anchor: In other news, a shooting in the Washington Highlands neighborhood of Southeast DC. Four suspects attempted to carjack a vehicle when a police cruiser appeared. Shots were fired, and two of the suspects were shot and killed, along with the passenger of the vehicle. The other two suspects fled and have not been found. One of the officers on the scene was wounded.

Male Anchor: That's interesting. Up next, a new climate bill for congress. Will the two parties every agree? Also in the news, a certain famous Actress uses the N-word in an interview—will she go into damage control? Stay tuned.

To the kitchen making coffee.

Cracking an egg into the pan.

Bread into the toaster.

Sliding the egg onto the toast.

Coffee into a mug.

Carrying the plate, the mug, to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

Dialing.

Cell, 6:40 AM

Malika: Hello?

Kyin: Sun—hey, it's Energy.

Malika: Hey, Energy. You see that double shooting on the news?

Kyin: Yeah—anything on it?

Malika: Not much, yet. I've got two nodes that live around that area. They checked it out, got photographs—not much else. Just a few boys running shooting. Tried to jack a car, right when police were driving by. Stupid. I'll get back if I hear anything.

Kyin: Alright, well, I'll call you tonight anyway. The first Friday is next week.

Malika: Yep—I've been making some nice progress into the Highlands this past month. Getting nodes—recruiting, I mean.

Kyin: Great. I'm expecting things to pick up in June. It's always a crazy month for murders.

Malika: Yeah, I know it.

Kyin: Ok—until tonight.

Malika: Bye.

Eating watching the screen.

7:23 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email.

Email Inbox, 7:23 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

The 38th parallel was arbitrarily assigned by the US and the USSR—Japan had killed and raped Koreans for—

Quickly closes the email.

"Fucking Ian," she says. "You never stop," she says.

Clicks open her blog.

Blog, 7:36 AM

I've installed 4 new cameras in the past 2 weeks:

Congress Heights

Buzzard Point

Marshall Heights

Clay Terrace

Money is coming fairly regularly, so, at least for the moment, there are no funding issues.

Next week is the First Friday, so I'll write up a full report after that.

Ian keeps writing me...

Same old shit. DPRK.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Congress Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Buzzard Point.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Marshall Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Clay Terrace.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 1.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 2.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 3.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 4.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 5.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 6.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—Council Ward 7.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPS Chancellor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DC Mayor.*

Clicking open cameras—*Houses—DCPD Chief.*

Looking over the streets—the rooms.

Friday, June 4th

Clear, 60°

8:10 AM

"This month," says Kyin, reaching into her bag, "is paid for by the esteemed Councilmember from Ward 1."

Slapping the envelopes onto the table.

The others sliding folding the brown packages into their pockets, their bags.

Then again sitting around the kitchen table.

Sorting photographs and notes.

8:22 AM

"So, tell me again," says Kyin, leaning over Patrick Walker's shoulder, "who's walking the beat in Washington Highlands?"

"Highlands?" he asks.

"Let me see," he says.

Digging through a notebook.

Then nodding. "Washington Highlands," he says, pointing to his writing, "is covered by Mica. He's only been there two weeks. Joined up after we photographed him with some K Street hookers."

Nodding sitting Kyin. "Ok," she says.

"And—you know, I've been meaning to tell you, I'm really worried about the area between—you know, Clay Terrace?"

Standing Kyin walking to the wall, the map—pointing at a line.

Patrick Walker standing looking at the line, the street.

"Yeah," he says, "I know it. No, we don't have a node over there yet. We've got—you see," he says, looking at Kyin, "remember a while back, there was, seems like every other week there was shooting around Minnesota Avenue Metro?"

Nodding Kyin. "Oh—yeah," she says.

"Right," he says, "well, after that—that's around the time I got a new node—Coal, we call him—so I sent him over there. But that's more the other end."

"Yeah," says Kyin.

Standing staring at the map.

Then reaching into her pocket—handing Patrick Walker her phone.

“Give Coal a call,” she says.

Nodding Patrick Walker.

Dialing.

Cell, 8:33 AM

[Coal]: Hello?

PW: Hey—Coal, this is Iron—PW.

Coal: Oh, hey, whaddup?

PW: I got Energy here—she wants to ask you a couple questions.

Kyin: Coal?

Coal: Oh, hey—nice to meet you, Energy.

Kyin: So you’re in Marshall Heights—is that right?

Coal: What—no, uh, not really. I really stay closer toward the River.

Kyin: Ok, so, the reason I’m asking is because there’s been some stuff going on near Clay Terrace—you know it?

Coal: Yep.

Kyin: What’s it been like near Minnesota?

Coal: It’s been pretty good, actually. People love me here—I’m like the man, you know? I got this daily routine and everything. Walking getting a coffee and shit.

Kyin: Ok, so—alright, so we’ve got two choices here, Coal. The thing is, we really need a node over on East Capitol, ok? So, either you’ll have to split your time between Minnesota and East Capitol, or you’ll have to recruit another node.

Coal: Ah, shit. I really like this area, you know?

Kyin: Do you know anyone you could recruit? Someone that’d be good to work East Capitol?

Coal: Let me think a sec.

Kyin: It’d have to be someone you get along with, because you two would be sharing a border.

Coal: Yeah, ok. Let me think.

Kyin: Ok, well—Iron will get in touch with you, ok? Then you can let him know. But we need someone on East Capitol by the end of next week.

Coal: Ah, shit. Yeah, ok. Let me think.

Kyin: Alright. Alright, so—hey, Coal, I’m glad to meet you, right?

Coal: [laughing] Yeah, I mean, I always asked Iron when I could meet you. Don’t worry, I won’t let you down, ok? I mean, the people here—yeah, I told you that. But, it’s just crazy, you know? It’s like they don’t just see me as a cop anymore, right? It’s like fucking Andy Griffith or something. Fucking beautiful.

Cell, 8:36 AM

Kyin: [laughing] Alright, well—good. So bring a friend, right?

Coal: Yeah—yeah, ok.

Kyin: Alright—and what's your shift over there?

Coal: I'm usually 1 to 1 or 2 to 2.

Kyin: Ok, I'll stop by some day. See you then.

Coal: Alright.

Closing the phone.

Smiling Kyin looking at Patrick Walker. "He's a trip," she says.

Patrick Walker shaking his head. "Shit," he says, "they're all like that. You should hear when we have our weekly meeting. That shit is non-stop."

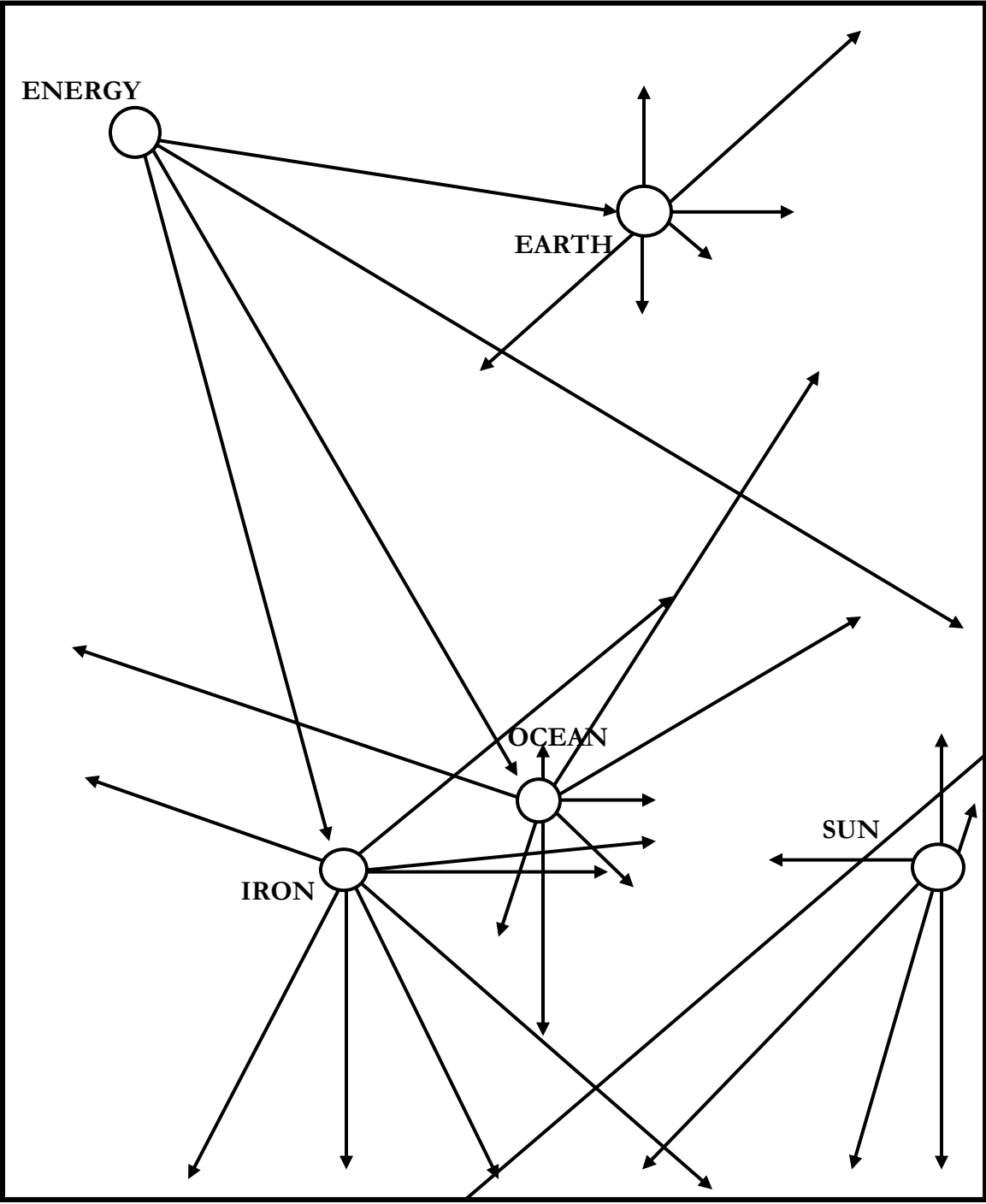
11:14 AM

Coming into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

To the couch, clearing the coffee table.

Spreading out poster paper—drawing mapping.



The ringing phone.

Cell, 11:54 AM

Kyin: Hello?

Lynn: Hi, Energy? This is Ocean.

Kyin: Hey, Ocean—is something wrong? You sound off.

Lynn: Yeah. I wanted to talk with you, but not around the others. At least not yet.

Kyin: Ok.

Lynn: Yeah. You know, I like where we're going, working against the gangs and cops in our neighborhoods. But, I mean, I wanted to talk with you about something else.

Kyin: Ok.

Lynn: Because, you know, for regular people, murders are only in the background. Boys killing boys. So mothers get wrapped up in it, and we know them because they're friends and neighbors, you know, but it's mostly just boys killing boys.

Kyin: Ok.

Lynn: But I want it to stop—which is why, I mean, I'm glad we've been working this way. But, see, I was thinking that, now we've got this on its way, maybe we can address other problems, you know?

Kyin: Yeah, ok.

Lynn: Look, I'm gonna come out and tell you something, ok? And I would thank you if you just waited a little before you tell the others in the group.

Kyin: I won't say a word.

Lynn: Ok, good. Because—ok, I have AIDs. I mean—not AIDs, HIV. I've had it for a while.

Kyin: Wow. I'm so sorry, Lynn. I mean—are you—you have HIV?

Lynn: Yeah. So, I was thinking about it, and, you know, if you have HIV in DC, you're pretty much guaranteed to die. So, you know, I was thinking, maybe we could do something to change that. Maybe, you know, I've seen all that work we've done with working against the murders, and I thought, maybe we could attack this problem too. Maybe we could do something about it.

Kyin: Can I come see you, Lynn?

Lynn: What—yeah, ok.

Kyin: Ok, just hold on. I'll be there in a half hour.

Lynn: Ok, peace.

Kyin: Peace.

Quick packing—running down and out, up to Connecticut.

Grabbing a cab.

"19th and Eye Street Northeast."

12:21 PM

Coming down 19th—H Street.

Climbing the metal stairs.

Lynn leaning over the railing.

"Hey," she says, she smiles.

"Hey," says Kyin.

12:36 PM

Sitting sipping on the couch.

"Yeah," says Lynn, "I'm sorry I didn't tell you. I think, I usually figure that people will guess."

"How would we guess?"

"Yeah, I mean—I just figure it shows—you know, my skin, I'm all skin and bones. My face."

"No—I wouldn't ever guess."

"I just wanted to tell you first, you know. Because, most people don't realize what it's like to have it. How hard it is to get treatment. I mean—I keep thinking, in the Bible, they had lepers. That's how it is with AIDs, with the virus. If people know about it, then you—they treat you like a leper."

Leaning Kyin reaching hugging Lynn.

"Lynn, I have to tell you—my name's not Helen Chang. It's Kyin Choi. I use the name Helen Chang sometimes when I don't know if I can trust someone."

"Kyin? That's your real name?"

Nodding Kyin, reaching into her pocket—pulling out a case, her license—handing it to Lynn.

Lynn reading the license.

"Kyin Choy," she says.

"Cho-ay—almost like Che," says Kyin, looking at the photograph, the fingerprint.

"That's really weird," says Lynn.

Laughing Kyin. "I'm sorry," she says.

Lynn smiling, handing back the license.

"No," she says, "I didn't mean weird like that—just—you know?"

Nodding smiling Kyin. "Yeah," she says, "It is a little weird, isn't it? Why do I do that?"

1:29 PM

The two sitting eating cheese sandwiches.

On the couch—Kyin with her computer lapped.

“Ok,” she says, pointing to the screen, “from what I can tell, funding for DC AIDs clinics is distributed by this woman running the HIV/AIDs Administration. So, what we’ll do is, we’ll keep an eye on her, but we’ll also use our Councilmembers to get funding.”

Nodding Lynn writing in her notebook.

Kyin looking at Lynn. “We need to get you a computer,” she says.

Shrugging Lynn.

“Yeah,” says Kyin. “Ok—so, I mean, Lynn, this is going to be your baby. We’ll need to find a replacement for you, someone to run Carver Langston. And then, what we’ll do, we’ll find a place for you to run this clinic.”

Lynn looking tapping her pen against her lips.

Kyin typing into her laptop. “We’re going to order you a computer—but first—ok,” she looks at Lynn, “this will, you’ll run it almost the same way as we’re doing now. We’ll set up a clinic, a place where people who have HIV and AIDs, where they can just come and, you know, whatever—if they need care, we’ll give it to them, or if they just want to hang out, that’s fine, too. But—so, ok,” she says, pointing at the screen, “this is what I was thinking about. I was in Congress Heights the other day, and I saw this old run-down school building. I think it’s perfect for this. We could buy it and—”

“Buy it?”

“Sure,” says Kyin, “once we get our earmarks, and—you know, I keep thinking about that computer—why didn’t I think of it earlier? Ok,” says Kyin, standing, “let’s go buy you a computer—actually, a computer for each of the lead nodes—Iron, Sun, Earth—we need to set up—I want to begin, alright, did I ever tell you about my news idea?”

Lynn standing shaking her head. “No,” she says.

The two walking exiting the building. “Ok,” says Kyin, “I’m sick of the big news, the newspapers and television programs—I mean, what do they tell us about our neighborhoods? If they mention us at all, it’s to spend five seconds—where’s the best place to catch a cab?”

Nodding pointing Lynn, “Benning,” she says.

“Ok,” says Kyin.

The two walking down 19th Street.

“So, I’ve been thinking—I mean, why don’t we do our own news, you know? We could have a community news network. We could just set up a website—call it, *Community Voices*, something like that—and we, each of us, write what’s going on, you know?”

“What would we write about?”

“Everything—ok? The real news. Things people in the neighborhood care about. Whatever’s important to people in the neighborhood. If it’s—ok, for example, people in Marshall Heights, right now they could be writing about the gang war going on over there. But over in Trinidad, where it’s cooled down a bit, people could write about the recreation center, the restoration going on over there. But, you know, if someone gets shot, murdered—it wouldn’t be a five-second news piece. We could write a whole article on it. We’d interview the mother, the brothers and sisters, so they could tell their side of the story. Interview everyone, you know? And, you know, as word spread—I mean, if people knew that this was a neighborhood newspaper, not some big corporation out to make money, then, you know, after a while they’d begin to trust it, to rely on it.”

Coming to Benning—waving down a cab.

The two sitting riding.

“What’s even better,” says Kyin, “is that, I mean—you know, I’ve been storing all of our photographs on my own little private blog—it’s more of like an online place to store things. But, with this, we could post those photographs online, on the Community News website. Instead just photographing people, we’d be photographing and interviewing them for a community newspaper.”

“All of us?”

“Yeah,” says smiling Kyin, “All of us.”

3:40 PM

The cab coming up 19th Street—stopping at H Street.

Lynn and Kyin exiting the cab. Climbing the metal stairs.

Carrying brown boxes into the apartment.

“Ok,” says Kyin, “so you can give Iron his computer, right?”

Nodding Lynn. “Sure,” she says. “I see him everyday justabout.”

Nodding Kyin. “Good,” she says. “So, I’ll go over to Sun and Earth—give them theirs. Then, I’ll set up the website and the first couple interviews and photographs. I mean, your main thing from now on is gonna be the HIV/AIDs Center—so, I mean, eventually, in the future, you’ll be using your section of the Community News to add updates on the

Center. But, for now, we'll just try to get things started. I mean—I'll get going on buying that old school building and all that, and, I'll—"

Lynn shaking her head.

"What?" asks Kyn.

"Nothing," says Lynn.

Nodding Kyn. "Ok," she says—hugging Lynn.

Then picking up a box—exiting the apartment.

Wednesday, June 16th

Sunny, 73°

7:05 AM

Coming into the apartment. Tossing the brown bag onto the coffee table.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Clicks on the local news.

News, 7:06 AM

Female Anchor: Also in the news today, another shooting in the Marshall Heights neighborhood, near the Harris Recreation Center at the 5300 Block of C Street in Southeast. Police responded to an anonymous call to find an unidentified man lying shot. Police took the man to the nearest hospital, where he was declared dead.

Police are withholding the name until family members are notified.

Male Anchor: That's a shame. Up next, your sports scores.

To the coffee table.

Grabbing a notebook—writing the address.

5300 Block of C Street Southeast

Harris Rec Center

Unidentified

Grabbing her phone—placing a call.

Cell, 7:11 AM

[Coal]: Hello?

Kyin: Coal—this is Energy.

Coal: Oh, hey—what's up?

Kyin: There was a shooting last night near the Harris Rec Center—you know it?

Coal: Oh—I mean, a little, you know? I heard that, though. Hey—I've got a guy for that area—did Iron tell you?

Kyin: No, not yet. Tell you what, meet me at the school there in 25 minutes with the new guy, ok?

Coal: Oh—ok, I think I can get him.

Kyin: Ok—see you.

Dressing packing.

Down and up to Connecticut.

Grabbing a cab.

“East Capitol and Central Avenue.”

7:45 AM

Coming down 53rd—two men in uniform standing talking.

“Hey,” says Kyin.

The men turning looking.

The man on the left holding his hip.

“Can I help you, ma’am?” he asks.

Smiling Kyin. “Are you Coal?” she asks.

The man staring—then grinning.

“Shit,” he says, “you’re Energy?”

Nodding Kyin—setting her jaw.

“Yep,” she says. “You find the scene?”

The man nodding. “Yeah,” he says, turning pointing.

“This way,” he says.

The three walking.

“This is Steel,” says the Coal.

Nodding Kyin; nodding Steel.

8:17 AM

Crossing the basketball courts.

"Over here," says pointing Coal.

A small spot on the concrete.

Kyin reaching into her bag—leaning shooting pictures.

Then standing pulling out a recorder—holding it up to the officers.

"What was his name?" she asks.

"Jemari Jones," says Coal.

Nodding Kyin. "And the shooter?"

The two looking at each other—then looking at Kyin .

"Justin Gallioli," says Coal. "Off-duty."

"Off duty? As in—DC police?"

Nodding Coal—glancing at Gray.

"Aissh," says Kyin.

The stands—looking. "Shit," she says. "Either of you know him?"

The two shaking their heads.

"He was off-duty," says Coal.

Nodding Kyin. "Yeah," she says, "you said that already. But you don't have any details?"

Coal shrugging. "Says he tried to rob him. So he shot him."

Nodding Kyin—looking at them each.

Then again down at the ground.

"The same old," she says.

"Ok," she says, looking up, "I guess that's it. I don't think I'll get anywhere asking questions with you two hanging around. How you making it, Coal? Things going alright over in Minnesota?"

The man on the left nodding smiling.

"Hell, yeah," he says. "I love this damn, job—like I told you," he says. "I was telling Thom—Steel, it's like the goddamn old days, you know? Like in the movies. I mean, I just walk around the streets, smiling at people and shit, and it's fucking crazy, you know?"

Nodding Kyin. "What about that Metro stop over there—what's that like?"

Coal shrugging. "Shit, you know—they know me. I know all their names over there, those boys. They used to talk shit and all—" he looks over at Steel, "I'll take you on over there—show you how to handle a big group like that. You know," he says, looking back at Kyin, "I

just get in there and talk to them. Before, when I'd see a group of those boys hanging, I'd only stop and lean out my window."

Nodding Kyin.

The two men nodding.

"Alright," says Kyin—shaking hands. "Nice meeting you guys. I'll be here for a while. I guess Iron didn't tell you the new way we're handling shootings like this?"

Coal shaking his head. "No—huh? No, he didn't say anything—why—"

"No, don't worry about it," says Kyin. "This'll be the first one—no, forget I said anything," she laughs, "Iron will fill you in."

8:58 AM

Knocking Kyin.

A woman opening a door. "Yeah?" she asks.

"Hi," says smiling Kyin, "my name's Kyin. I'm writing a story on the murder last night. Do you know anything about it?"

The woman shaking her head. "I didn't see anything," she says.

"Alright," says Kyin. "Did you know the victim—Jemari Jones?"

"No," says the woman.

"Ok," says smiling Kyin. "Can I ask your name?"

"Deena."

"Deena, do you know where I can find any relatives of Jemari Jones?"

The woman quiet looking at Kyin.

"No," she says—shutting the door.

10:12 AM

Coming into a group of women sitting talking.

Interviewing the women.

11:33 AM

Knocking on doors and talking.

12:44 AM

Coming to Apartment 444.

Knocking Kyin.

A boy opening the door.

Bright eyes blinking behind the jamb.

Standing staring at Kyin.

Bending Kyin. "Hello," she says, "is your Mom home?"

A woman coming to the door—pushing the boy aside.

"Can I help you?" she asks.

"Hello, ma'am—yes, my name is Kyin, and I'm reporting on last night's shooting. Are you a relative of the deceased?"

"Yes."

"Oh—I'm very sorry for your loss."

The woman standing staring.

"Anything else?"

"Actually—I was wondering—what was he like?"

"Who—Jemari?"

"Yes—Jemari. What was he like?"

The woman looking at Kyin.

"He was—you mean, what happened?"

"No, I mean—I just mean, what was he like? What kind of person was he?"

The woman turning to the left—then turning back.

"He was a decent man," she says.

Nodding Kyin.

"What did he like to eat?" she asks.

The woman standing staring.

"Eat?" she asks.

Nodding Kyin.

"He—fish sandwiches. That was his favorite thing."

"Fish sandwiches? You mean—that place on MLK?"

The woman smiling—then turning to the side.

Then crying.

Nodding—stopping crying.

Then turning back.

"Damn fish sandwiches," she says.

Smiling Kyin. "Their good, though," she says.

The smiling woman—wet eyes.

"Would you like to come in?" she asks.

5:12 PM

Coming into the apartment.

Turning on the AC—to the kitchen for water cold.

Clicking open—*Community Chorus*.

Community Chorus, 5:12 PM

There was a shooting last night in Marshall Heights, right in front of the Harris Recreation Center, next to the basketball courts. The victim's name was Jemari Jones. Jemari worked the night shift at the gas station up Southern Avenue.

Around 4:40 AM last night, Jemari was coming home. He'd just left his shift, and was wearing his black polo uniform and khaki pants. Coming down C Street, Jemari ran into Officer Justin Gallioli of the DC Police Force.

This is Officer Gallioli's third year serving with the DC Police. Before that, Officer Gallioli served with the US Military, which included a stint in Afghanistan. While in Afghanistan, Officer Gallioli lost two fellow soldiers to roadside IEDs.

Officer Gallioli grew up in PG County. After moving back to the area three years ago, he found an inexpensive duplex in the Marshall Heights neighborhood within the District. Yesterday, Officer Gallioli worked a late-afternoon shift, coming off work at around 4 AM. He went home and showered, then, for an unknown reason, went out to his vehicle, parked in his driveway.

Coming down C Street, Jemari saw a man coming out of a house. The man was wearing sweatpants and a T-shirt, just walking to his car. Jemari called over to the man, greeting him.

The man was leaning into his car at that moment. When he heard Jemari's yell—suddenly, Officer Gallioli stood straight, coming out of his vehicle with a gun pointed at Jemari. He yelled for Jemari to get on the ground.

Jemari didn't get onto the ground. He saw the gun, the man—and he ran. Running across the basketball court, where—at the end—Officer Gallioli fired into his back—three shots.

Jemari Jones was killed instantly—one of the bullets entering through the base of his skull.

Jemari grew up in South Carolina, in a small town of around 4,000 people. He moved to DC in the early 90s, coming to live with a friend. That friend ended up being a crack addict.

This shooting highlights the main cause behind the majority of DC Police shootings: officers out of uniform (either off-duty or undercover) continuing to act like officers on the job.

In the mind of a police officer, one is never off duty. There is no such thing as "off duty." This applies especially to the gut—feelings—instincts. Imagine the following scenarios:

Community Chorus

1. An female officer is off work, grocery shopping, when she sees a man robbing a gas station across the road. The officer runs and yells “Freeze—police!” What the criminal sees is a woman holding a gun yelling. The woman is not wearing a uniform. The woman is not in or near a police cruiser. Is it a cop? The criminal refuses to comply. Shot—dead.

2. The same scenario happens, only this time, the officer is undercover. Effectively, from the point of view of citizens, “off duty” and “undercover” are the same. An off-duty cop is an undercover cop. The “cover” is their home life. The difference here—a difference that causes many deaths—is, simply, the uniform. The uniform, the police car, while they may seem simple “trappings,” in fact are what make an officer an officer in the eyes of citizens. To a citizen, a police officer is defined by the uniform. To the police officer, the uniform is not essential; they would still be an officer, even while naked. It is the meeting of these two views that forces a clash.

3. A man is thinking of engaging in a criminal act. Then, he sees a police uniform. So he stops his act.

4. A man is thinking of engaging in a criminal act. He sees only normally clothed citizens. He commits the act. A normally clothed person yells—“Stop—Police!” The criminal, not seeing a uniform, flees.

It is not simply a coincidence that the majority of DC Police shootings are committed by plainclothed (off-duty, undercover) officers.

The fundamental flaw here, is a police force that is designed to “catch” criminals. This is a police force that believes some people to be inherently “bad”. A police force that believes that some people are “born” criminals.

The purpose of a police force, instead, should be to prevent the means for creating crimes. A police officer should not be waiting to “catch” criminals. They, instead, should be working to stop people from becoming criminals. Taking away the means for people to become criminals. Prevention.

A police officer sees a group of “young men” standing talking on the corner. How will he jargonize them? As a “crew” or “gang”? As “dealers”? Instead of allowing them to coalesce in his mind as a jargon, he should simply approach the young men in a friendly manner. Joke with them. Let them know that he is their friend, that he is on their side. This is 1 police officer. How much can a single individual accomplish?

This kind of mentality—the refusal to jargonize—needs to spread throughout the police force. Prevention means also, of course, changing the environment. Giving schoolchildren after-school programs. Develop work-study programs. Developing computer-oriented training centers for high school youths. Prepare these kids for jobs in the tech sector. Police officers walk the streets as friends, not enemies.

We are a long way away from this.

We are a virus—changing consciousness.

Friday, July 2nd

Humid, 74°

9:11 AM

Into her bag—dropping the envelopes onto the table.

“From now on,” says Kyin, “our funding will be divided a bit differently. The earmarks we’ve been getting from Councilmembers will be split between Iron, Sun, and Earth. The new money coming in from the DC HIV/AIDs Administration will be funding Ocean’s project. I’ll be taking around ten percent for funding the Community News.”

The others nodding picking up the envelopes.

“I’ve noticed, too,” says Kyin, “that the Community News hasn’t quite caught on yet. I think part of the problem is that—that I didn’t make clear that this isn’t just supposed to be about news covering murders—covering crime, ok?

“This is supposed to be a real community news—news about everything in the community. Things like—I mean, people can write about local basketball games, summer jobs—anything, you know? It’s supposed to be the opposite, really, of national news.

“Stories about everyday people living everyday lives. I mean—you can think of it as local gossip. Who’s that—Ocean, who’s the girl you know, the one who likes to talk?”

“They all like to talk.”

“Yeah, but—you know, the one with the little boy that’s always acting out—she’s younger, staring at me like she hates me.”

Nodding Lynn. “Tasha,” she says.

Nodding Kyin. “Yeah,” she says, “Tasha—she’d be a perfect person to write for this. Get her, I mean—see, that’s the thing. The word ‘news,’ makes people think that their lives won’t be important enough—I mean—”

Looking around the room, the group.

Nodding Kyin. “Right,” she says. “Ok—I’ll write, I’ll have to write more, to get started.

“But think of it this way, ok? We’ve been reacting—right? People are shot, dealing—predators. So, our work, our photographs, maps, charts—it’s all been reactionary—negative. Well, we—we’re at the point where we need to switch gears—here, let me—come here and take a look at this.”

Moving sitting opening her computer.

The others standing behind.

“Ok,” says Kyin. “We know this part. So far, we’ve done a few stories—the Marshall Heights murder, a few muggings. But I want something from the community. Let’s start first with—” pushing back from the chair, “ok—first,” she says, “for the news, we’ll all be using our real names, ok?”

The others looking each to each.

“My name,” says Kyin, “is Kyin.”

The others standing looking.

“I thought your name was Helen,” says Earth.

“Yeah,” says Iron.

Nodding Kyin. “Yes,” she says, “I made that up. I use that name around people I don’t know.”

“My name’s Lynn,” says Lynn.

“Ok,” says Kyin—leaning over the computer.

Clicking open—*Community Chorus*.

“Ok, Lynn—what’s the news in Carver Langston?” asks Kyin.

Lynn sitting looking at the screen.

Sitting quiet.

Then leaning forward.

Community Chorus, 9:22 AM

Carver/Langston

The grocery store on Maryland Avenue is completed.

The three boys that stand down on 18th Street

“Well,” she says, “they finished building that new grocery store down Maryland.”

“What else—you, too, Patrick.”

“Patrick?” asks Lynn, looking at Officer Walker. “That’s your name?”

Grinning Officer Walker. “Yep,” he says.

“Ok,” he says, “the three boys on—”

“Here,” says standing Kyin, nodding at the

screen, “you two finish. Just write everything that’s going on. This is neighborhood news, right? So you two write it. Everything—not just the bad news. Write about the good too, ok? We need more of the good out there. So write about that. Write about the good.”

Wednesday, July 14th

Sunny, 92°

1:32 PM

Along the Mall—the Monuments—meeting talking with men on benches, women with grocery carts.

Exchanging film for film. Envelopes for information.

2:10 PM

“Hey—Energy!” the man coughing sitting up from the bench.

“I’ve got something,” he says—holding out a roll of film.

“Thanks,” says Kyin, taking the roll.

Hot humid heat.

Thick air drawing sweat from skin.

“No,” he says, shaking his head, “I’ve got something else—someone you know.”

Sitting Kyin—handing him an envelope.

The two sitting in Dupont—along the round black bench.

“Who’s that?” she asks.

The man smiling. “I don’t know who, exactly,” he says, “but he’s one of them, that’s for sure.”

The man lifting his hand—thumbing toward the Capitol building.

“I’ve seen him,” says the man, “yelling on the news.”

Kyin following the thumb—then looking back at the man.

“Got him how?” she asks.

The man laughing. “Fucking some ho,” he says.

Staring Kyin.

The man grinning—then laughing.

“No shit?” she asks.

The man nodding laughing.

“Where?” she asks.

The man shrugging slowing his laughing.

Smiling Kyin—reaching into her bag.

“You’re a good man,” she says.

Then hands him another envelope.

“Kamsahamnida,” he says.

Nodding Kyin. “Who taught you how to say that?”

The man smiling counting money.

Looking Kyin. “Who taught you Korean?” she asks.

The man nodding—sliding the money into a bag.

Then laying back onto the bench.

4:22 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the AC—to the kitchen for water cold.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Inserting a disk—uploading images.

Clicking through the pictures.

“Fucking shit,” she says.

“I know you,” she says.

5:12 PM

Searching—“Congress group photographs,” “Senators group photographs.”

Searching reading refining.

Opening her notebook—writing.

Senator Hooker 5300 Palisade Lane NW

Printing a copy of the photograph.

Writing a note.

Most Esteemed Senator,

Please meet me at Meridian Hill Park this Friday Night—Saturday Morning at 2AM. I’ll be standing next to Jeanne d’Arc.
--

With most sincere appreciation,

Ms. Chang

Grabbing an enveloping—writing.

**CONFIDENTIAL—FOR THE SENATOR’S EYES ONLY
DO NOT BEND—PHOTOGRAPHS**

The Esteemed Senator
5300 Palisade Lane NW
Washington, DC 20016

5:43 PM

Down and up to Columbia—to 18th Street.

Dropping the envelope into a Post Office Box.

Saturday, July 16th

Clear, 75°

2:00 AM

A man walking up the stairs.

Alongside the water rolling down into the fountain.

Climbing up to Jeanne d’Arc.

2:07 AM

“Ms. Chang?” he asks.

Nodding Kyin holding out her hand. “Nice to meet you,” she says.

The man nodding shaking her hand.

“Charmed,” he says.

Sitting on the platform—pulling up the legs of his pants.

“Pardon me a moment to smoke,” he says.

Nodding looking Kyin. Flicking lighting a cigarette.

“How’d you get here?” she asks.

The man exhaling shrugging. “I walked,” he says.

Then points his cigarette at his sneakers.

Looking nodding Kyin.

Smoke pouring from his nose.

“Yes, I know,” he says, “I’m a fitness freak—but I can’t stop smoking.”

The smiling Senator.

Sitting Kyin watching him smoking.

2:14 AM

The Senator stubbing the cigarette.

"There," he says. "Thank you—I needed that."

"Now," he says, turning to her, "I suppose you want something from me?"

Nodding Kyin—reaching into her bag.

Then handing him a sheet of paper.

The Senator reaching into his pocket—pulling out and putting on glasses.

Then grabbing reading the paper.

"Earmarks," he says.

"For—what's this for? Black people?"

Nodding to himself—reading.

Kyin reaching digging—handing him another sheet of paper.

The Senator reading the sheet.

"Who—why are they on this list?" he asks.

Looking up at Kyin.

"That's a list of people that work with us. And their phone numbers."

The Senator staring at her—then looking again at the page.

"Shit," he laughs.

Nodding, turning the pages.

Kyin pointing to a line. "That is what you'll be funding. We're opening a clinic for AIDs and HIV victims. We need a big bankroll to get started."

The Senator nodding smiling.

Then picking out and lighting a cigarette.

"Ok," he says. "I can do that."

The smoke rolling blue and white in the light.

"Anything else?" he asks, he grins.

Staring Kyin.

"No," she says. "I guess not."

The Senator nodding smiling standing holding out his hand.

"Alright," he says. "Then, I have to get going. Nice meeting you, Ms. Chang."

The two shaking hands.

The Senator turning walking out of the park. Kyin following behind.

Watching the Senator sliding into a black SUV.

Speeding down 16th Street.

The bright Monument in the distance.

Friday, August 6th

Sunny, humid, 98°

11:22 AM

Into her bag—dropping the envelopes onto the table.

“Thanks, all,” says Kyin, “for staying late today. I know it’s disgusting outside.”

The others gathering around the table—picking up the envelopes.

“Hell,” says Charles, sitting, “I’m not even trying to go back out there.”

Nodding sitting Kyin.

The others sitting nodding.

3:40 PM

Sitting drinking.

Kyin placing her palms on the table—leaning forward.

“I didn’t tell you the best part,” she says.

“What’s that?” asks Lynn.

“With the Senator’s money, we’ve got enough now to get started on the HIV/AIDs project.

We’ll start working on fixing up that old school this coming Monday.”

Smiling Lynn.

Drinking nodding Kyin.

“Who you got doing the construction?” asks Charles.

“Nodes,” says Kyin.

“Nodes—which nodes?”

Drinking Kyin leaning forward. “You tell any nodes you can to come help—we’ll pay them forty dollars an hour. This is a federally funded project, right? We can pay everyone what they deserve.”

“No shit?”

Nodding Kyin—“No shit,” she says.

8:10 PM

Coming into the building—checking her mail.
Into the elevator—the hallway.
Jangling keys.
“Hey.”
Turning Kyin seeing Cate leaning into the hallway.
“Oh—hey,” says Kyin.
Smiling Cate. “You look a little drunk,” she says.
Grinning Kyin.
“Yeah,” she says, “a little.”

Monday, August 16th
Sunny, 82°
6:12 AM

Standing Kyin smoking.
Mr. Dixon crossing the street—coming to the sidewalk.
“You’re late,” says Kyin.
Nodding smiling Mr. Dixon.
7:11 AM
Carrying the computer to the couch.
Clicking open her email.

Email Inbox, 7:11 AM
From: Ian
Kyin,
I’m beginning to see how it works.
Kim Il Sung decided one day to create a new form of reality. Juche. I’m surprised,
now that I think of it, that he did not try to create a new language, or at least a new
alphabet (following Sejong). He used force to get—

Closing the email.
Then pulling the stone from her pocket.
Pressing the heel of her hand against her lid.

“Fuck,” she says.

2:45 PM

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 2:45 PM Migraine today. Just took 6 hours out of my life.

Standing slowly dressing.

Down and up to Columbia. Into a 7-11.

Buying an energy drink, a hot dog, a jerky stick.

Clicking—hissing—sipping.

Standing watching the street. Eating drinking.

3:11 PM

Grabbing a cab.

“Montello Deli.”

3:18 PM

Exiting paying.

Entering the storefront.

Into the back. Patrick Walker—Iron standing nodding grinning.

“You look like shit,” he says.

Grinning Kyin. “Thanks,” she says. “I feel great. I had a migraine this morning—nasty shit. But I feel great now.”

Iron shaking his head.

“So,” he says, “I’ve finally got something going here with T-Shirt.”

Nodding Kyin. “Good,” she says.

Nodding Iron. “Yeah—this guy, Green, he’s a real dick, but what can you do, right? We got him cold with that Barry Farm shooting. So he’s caved in, working for us. And now, last night, he calls me and says he’s got something with T-Shirt.”

“Something?”

Nodding grinning Iron. “Exactly—hey, I just got off—you thirsty?”

Nodding Kyin. “Eh—yeah, sure. But I need some food.”

“Alright,” he says.

Iron walking exiting. Kyin following.

The two stepping into the patrol car.

Driving up West Virginia.

3:31 PM

Sitting in *Juke*.

"I'd like Green to run that whole thing," says Kyin.

"What's that?" asks Iron.

Drinking Kyin. "The whole thing—T-Shirt and all of that—Trinidad—Northeast. Move you across the River."

Iron looking at his bottle, at Kyin.

"Alright," he says. "How we gonna do that, then?"

Nodding Kyin. "We'll just have talk to him, explain things."

Nodding drinking Iron. "Yeah, alright, then," he says.

"You know this guy Green is a fucking devil, right? Like—an evil fucker."

Nodding smiling Kyin. "Yep," she says.

"I'm counting on it," she says.

5:10 PM

Into her apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

To the couch—napping—sleeping.

Wednesday, September 22nd

Clear, 80°

11:17 PM

Coming over the river.

Into the school building dilapidated.

Men and women painting, tearing down walls, hammering.

"Hey—!" yells Charles—Earth.

Walking down stairs to Kyin.

Smiling Charles.

"Where'd you get so many people?" asks Kyin.

Charles lifting his hat—wiping his forehead.

"It's like I said," he says, "if you give people work—then they'll work."

Turning looking at the people working.

Nodding Kyin.

Charles leading Kyin through the building.

"This is a nice old building," he says. "Some nice detail work in here—old stuff."

He stops to point at a door jamb, the cracked paint.

"Probably some lead paint though, so we'll have to be careful with that."

Continuing up the stairs, into a bright room big.

"He's what I wanted to show you," he says.

Lynn kneeling standing smiling at Kyin. "Hey," she says.

Charles walking to the windows.

"This," he says.

Kyin walking standing next to Charles.

Bright windows lighting over the river down below.

Nodding Kyin—smiling looking at Charles.

Monday, October 4th

Cloudy, 60°

6:15 AM

Florida—West Virginia—Oates Street.

Coming up to a police cruiser—stepping through the rear door, sitting.

Officer Jason Green sitting looking into the rearview mirror—back at Kyin.

Then looking back out onto the street.

6:23 AM

A man coming slow down the sidewalk.

Then sliding into the front passenger seat.

The cruiser pulling out and climbing up against the university, the cemetery.

The passenger looking over at the driver. "What's the story today, Green?" he asks.

Officer Green nodding to the back seat.

The passenger turning looking back at Kyin.

"Shit," he says.

"I didn't even see you back there," he says.

Then turns back to Officer Green. "Who's she?" he asks.

Officer Green glancing into the mirror.

"That," he says, "is Energy."

The passenger nodding.

Officer Green looking in the mirror at Kyin looking.

"And, Energy, this," he says, "is Fire—you know him as T-Shirt."

Kyin nodding.

6:26 AM

The three coming into Carver Terrace.

Climbing up and into an apartment.

Sitting.

Officer Green leaning, tossing a pad onto the table.

"What've you got?" he asks—looking to Fire.

Fire leaning rubbing his chin.

"Got about—30, 40 boys running up and down Carver, Langston, Kenilworth, 5th and O."

Officer Green nodding making notes.

"That's about what I thought. Now we need to start spreading north, moving up into Petworth, Columbia Heights."

Nodding Kyin.

"How're you all doing for money?" she asks.

Fire shrugging looking at Officer Green.

"We alright," he says, "right, Green?"

Officer Green nodding writing.

Stopping looking at his notepad.

Then looking up at Kyin. "We'll need—about—in about two months," he says, "we'll need about one-hundred thousand of your earmarks."

Nodding Kyin.

"Ok," she says.

"We can do that," she says.

2:15 PM

Coming into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

To the couch—clicking open—*Community Chorus*.

COMMUNITY CHORUS

Quarles News—Week of October 4th

Malika/Sun

Cookout this weekend by the gardens. Saturday from 10AM until dusk. Come smell barbecue in among the Autumn leaves!

Janice H. reports:

Increased police presence this week around Douglas, Anacostia—on down to Deane. Last week, shots were fired around Deane Avenue, which could explain police presence.

Callie P. reports:

Young men continuing to hang out around the Minnesota Avenue Metro. (Node Coal confirms).

Carver/Langston News—Week of October 4th

Lynn/Ocean

Remodeling of Maryland Avenue Market continues. Says manager Sam, “We found a leak up behind the ceiling tile.”

Street Interviews asks: “What’s your view on the Mayor?”

Says William S.: “Not impressed. He’s in bed with big business.”

Says Tasha B.: “I wish he’d give us some more jobs.”

Says Yancy L.: “We gotta be realistic. He’s better than it could be.”

Opinion Section—guest written by Lincoln M.

Homeless living in the Winter. Out there on the streets, you will meet some stubborn folk. That’s the way of life living homeless. But you have to be that way, else you might not survive.

Many homeless men and women choose not to live in shelters, even during the Winter. I went out and asked a few of these fine people why they choose to stay out in the cold. The general reason is people are afraid of getting things stolen while living in shelters.

COMMUNITY CHORUS

“Shelters have no privacy, “ says C.C.

Says Tom W.: “The last time I stayed in a shelter, I ended up with the flu for two weeks—and it was that damn Horse Flu. They tell me I’ll get sick if I stay in the cold, well the shelter made me sick!”

In my interviews, I found many people that agreed with these opinions. Myself, I choose to stay in a shelter. Maybe it’s just because my skin is too old, and the cold seeps into my bones. I’m willing to put up with the shelter in order to stay warm.

This is the first of what will be a weekly column on homelessness in the District.

Park Morton News—Week of October 4th

Charles/Earth

Georgia Avenue looking worse these days, with another liquor store opening past Harvard. Gentrification is on its way, though, no doubt about that. Another building complex, another conference with microphones and politicians patting themselves on the back. Construction has begun, tearing down Morton. Cranes and bulldozers.

Murder off Georgia over the weekend. Joshua H. found dead with gunshot wounds. I used to hang out with his mother, back when we were little kids. I lost track of her, met up with her this morning.

“He was still my baby,” she said.

“What was he into?” I asked.

“It’s no time to talk about that,” she said.

“Fair enough.”

“He was just sorting his life out. Getting back on track, starting a job.”

“Where’s that?”

“Driving bus for the city.”

“He have any kids?”

“He’s got a boy, Josh, Jr.”

“How old’s he?”

“12.”

It was nice seeing my old friend. Sad that she lost her boy. I asked around, seeing if anyone saw the shooting, but it happened at 3 AM. Poor boy was found on the sidewalk.

COMMUNITY CHORUS

Trinidad News—Week of October 4th

Patrick/Iron

Not much news to report. Trinidad is now mostly run by Green and Fire. I've been spending more time down in Barry Farm.

Next week, Green will take over writing this section, and I'll write for Barry Farm.

AIDs/HIV Center News—Week of October 4th

Lynn/Ocean

10 new patients within the past week—a busy week! 5 men, 5 women. All have HIV. Last week, Jillian H. passed away. We asked her daughter if she wanted to write some words.

Thoughts on Jillian H.

My Mom got HIV from the needle. I knew this, because she told me a few months ago. My Mom grew up hard, living hard as a kid, hard as a teenager, hard as a grown woman. She lived a hard life, and she died hard. She was raped by her friend when she was a little kid. She had a baby (me) when she was 16. Who knows who the father was. He left her alone, raising me. But you did good, Mom! She had drugs in her veins, but she pushed them out. Then she got the Virus in her veins, and it pushed her out. Mom, I miss you and I love you. You fought the battle, and I'm proud of you. You lived hard, so that I can live life a little easier. My life isn't so hard. I'm starting my second semester up at UDC, and my mom was so proud of me. Well, it's because of you!

Thanks Lynn for letting me write this.

Closing the computer shut.

Friday, October 29th

Showers, 55°

10:12 AM

Coming down Pennsylvania—wide boulevard facing the Capitol.

Into a restaurant—women and men, skirts and suits.

A table near the back.

The Senator standing shaking Kyin's hand.

"Good to see you," he says, he sits.

Sitting Kyin.

The waiter quick coming—Kyin ordering salad red.

The Senator beaming bright. “How’s the AIDs Center going?” he asks.

Nodding Kyin. “Great—thanks.”

The Senator nodding sipping whisky.

The salad coming—beets and apples, carrots and tomatoes.

“That’s red alright,” says Kyin—biting chewing.

The Senator silent.

“So,” he says, “what have you got for me this time—another hospital? Perhaps another branch somewhere else in the city?”

Eating Kyin, shaking her head. “Maybe someday,” she says, “but now—for now, we’re just concentrating on more—on—well, “resting her fork, “I have a new business plan for you, for us.”

The Senator nodding sipping.

Chewing swallowing Kyin.

“It’ll help,” she says, “if you can get one or two other Senators on board—preferably the ones sitting on your committee. But, the plan—ok—so, within the coming month—by the end of the year, we’re going to set up a political action committee. It’s name will be *People PAC*. This PAC will give you money for your campaigns—money to get you re-elected—for you and any other Senators that you bring in. In return, you will give us earmarks. At least three million a year.”

The Senator nodding drinking.

The waiter coming filling glasses.

The Senator smiling. “I like this idea,” he says.

Nodding Kyin—wiping the red from her mouth.

4:19 PM

Coming into the apartment cold. To the radiator—clicking the knob counterclockwise.

To the kitchen—making coffee drip.

To the couch—clicking open email.

Email Outbox, 4:27 PM

To: Darger

Darger,

I need you to send me a few of your nodes. I've been thinking about doing something here with Calvert Cliffs—the local nuclear power plant. You made me curious about it. I'm not sure yet what I have in mind, but if you send me a few nodes, I'm sure we can come up with something.

Energy

Friday, November 5th

Cloudy 50°

9:11 AM

The group sitting gathered around a table.

Malika—*Sun*—sorting photographs.

Charles—*Earth*—writing on the computer.

Patrick Walker—*Iron*—talking on a cellphone.

Lynn—*Ocean*—looking through folders.

Jason Green—*Green*—writing in a notebook.

T-Shirt—*Fire*—counting money.

Kyin—*Energy*—sorting through notebooks—reading writing.

11:39 AM

Standing Energy. "Ordering lunch—ok?" she says.

The others nodding.

Calling Energy.

12:15 PM

The group sitting eating talking.

Energy looking through a notebook.

Then looking up.

"Coming—at the end of this month," she says, "we'll have a political action committee—*People PAC*. We'll use this PAC to funnel money to politicians, so that they can run their campaigns. Then those politicians, once they're elected, they'll send money back to us. Earmarks. So, they'll be funding us—along with the DC Council contracts."

The group nodding listening.

Energy eating wiping her hands.

“With these coming earmarks,” she says. “we’ll have full funding for our work. And we’re going to be opening a community development bank—a CDB. Actually, it’ll be a credit union—funded by the US Treasury.”

The group eating listening.

“So what,” says Energy, “so within the next month, we need more members—more nodes. Everyone will put their money in this credit union.”

Eating swallowing Energy.

Looking at Sun. “So what we’ll need is—I’ll need you to find group of nodes to help me set up the credit union and the bank.”

Nodding writing Sun.

The group chewing listening.

“So we have—what do we have? We have—we’ll have a credit union, the AIDs/HIV Center, our network of nodes. The money will funnel up and down. Up to the re-election campaigns of these politicians, then back down to our network.”

Eating Energy—looking at Earth. “My plan,” she says, “is to work with you—so that, by Spring, we’ll be starting a construction company—*Community Construction*. We’ll work with the DC Council to get bids—contracts—to redevelop the neighborhoods. The money will feed back to the DC Council members—and they’ll award us contracts.”

Nodding Earth.

“So,” says Energy, “say—by the Spring, you need to get together a construction crew.”

Nodding Earth.

The group nodding eating.

3:14 PM

Energy coming up to Green.

“Can you give me a ride home?” she asks. “I want to go over a few things with you and Fire.”

Green nodding.

3:32 PM

The three climbing into the cruiser white and blue.

Coming up Florida.

Energy leaning into the front.

"Alright," she says. "have you—have either of you heard of the term *dirty tricks*?"

The two shrugging.

Nodding Energy. "From here on out," she says, "you two will be running your own organization—your own branch. I'll be funding you, and I'll check in with you once a month—but that's it. The rest, I don't really want to know about. Your job is to do everything you can to fuck with the police and the local crews. Fuck them up. I don't care how you do it—and I don't want to know."

The two nodding.

"*Special activities division*—we'll call you. *Dirty tricks*. Fuck them up. Fuck with their minds and their money."

The two nodding.

"Plant evidence," says Energy. "Frame—coverup, lie, steal, cheat. That's what I mean by dirty tricks, ok? You got me?"

The two nodding.

Energy reaching into her bag—pulling out boxes.

"Plant bugs on them," she says—handing the boxes to Fire. "Listen to them—watch them. Lie to their superiors. Leak false information to the press."

The two nodding.

Energy reaching into her bag—pulling out a brown bag.

Handing the bag to Fire.

"I'll bring you this money once a month," says Energy.

Coming up Connecticut.

"Ok," she says, "I'll get out here—no—shit, let me out somewhere where there aren't any people around."

Green nodding—driving up Columbia—down Mount Pleasant—a side alley.

Stopping—parking.

Green turning looking.

"Ok," he says. "you said dirty. How dirty?"

Nodding Energy.

"I don't want to know," she says.

"You run your own show," she says. "Hire your own crew—whoever you want."

"It can be real dirty," says Fire—turning. "Like war dirty."

"Like bodies," says Green.

The two staring.

Staring Energy—biting her cheek.

“I said dirty,” she says.

The two nodding.

Nodding Energy—exiting the vehicle.

Friday, November 12th

Windy, 53°

7:34 AM

Coming into the apartment—tossing the brown bag onto the table.

To the kitchen making coffee.

Clicking on the news.

News, 7:37 AM

Female anchor: A triple homicide in the Northeast neighborhood of Truxton Circle, just North of Dunbar High School. Three men were found dead on 200 Block of Bates Street Northwest.

Male anchor: That’s a tragedy. Also in the news, a US Special Envoy is planning on meeting with representatives from both Syria and Iran. Israel has protested the meeting, saying that both countries are enemies of their nation.

Female anchor: Interesting. Also in the news, a crowd of about 500 visited the Mall yesterday, protesting against the ongoing war in Iraq. Coming up, your 5-day forecast.

Rice from the rice cooker.

Tuna—rice—gochujang—
nori.

Coffee in a mug

To the couch.

Mutes—CCs—the screen.

6:18 PM

Standing Kyin moving across the hall—knocking.

Cate opening the door—smiling.

“Hey,” she says. “What’s up?”

Kyin sliding into the apartment. To the kitchen for wine corked—uncorked.

Pouring glasses two.

“I’m trying to figure out,” says sipping Kyin, “the best way to listen to people. To watch them.”

Sipping Cate. "I'm not sure I follow," she says.

Nodding sipping Kyin. "Like you do," she says. "Only more low budget."

"Like I do—at work?"

Nodding Kyin sliding to the couch.

"OWL," she says, "Observe, watch, listen. That's it, right?"

Cate coming—slow nodding. "Yes," she says.

"Like that," says Kyin.

Sipping Cate.

"But what I do," she says, "is—is observe, watch, listen—enemies."

Nodding Kyin. "Right," she says. "That's what I want to do, too. Enemies."

Cate to the kitchen—pouring—sipping—pouring.

Sipping.

Then walking over to the couch.

Sunday, November 14th

Windy, 48°

10:14 AM

To the couch—clicking open email.

Email Inbox, 10:14 AM

From: Darger

Energy,

I'm sending out my two best nodes. These guys know shitloads about nuclear power.

I've told them about what you're looking for, and they've already gone ahead and

looked over the plans for Calvert Cliffs. They'll be taking a flight into Dulles this

Wednesday—a red eye, arriving around 4:25 AM. One White guy, one Indian guy. The

White guy is lanky, with glasses, the Indian guy is shorter, with a gut. Things are going

great here. We've split off into 3 sections. Section 1 is based in Kennewick, hanging on

continuing work at NSA Yakima. Section 2, which I'm heading, is based in Seattle.

We're working against corporate interests. Section 3 is just beginning. I'm just sending

guys out into Northern California looking for more eco-freaks.

Good to hear from you, Energy.

Darger

Email Outbox, 10:22 AM

To: Darger

Darger,

I'll pick up the nodes—thanks. All good news, as usual. You're doing great work.

Here we've started a political action committee (People PAC). We use the money from our congressional and local earmarks to buy influence from politicians. We will help fund political campaigns, and, in return, they will give us earmarks. A feedback loop. This is how we are funded over here.

Follow this model:

Find a politician. Control this politician.

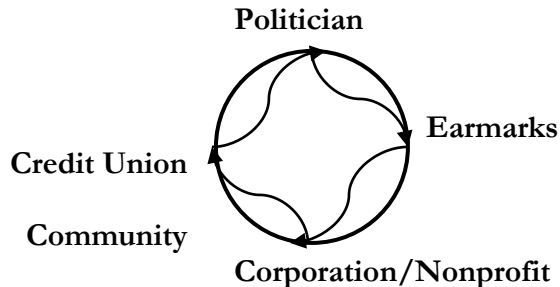
Set up a business or nonprofit. Funnel money to this. Here, we're running an HIV/AIDs Center and a newspaper (blog). We're starting a credit union and a construction company.

The politicians will award construction contracts to our company.

Follow this model.

Feedback loops: from the PAC to the politician to the earmarks to the construction company to the community to the credit union to the PAC.

Here is the map of our un-group:



This symbol will be worn by each node.

Local, local, local.

Smash jargons.

Energy

Friday, November 19th

Clear, 51°

2:12 PM

Driving down Maryland—Route 4.

The passengers sitting in the backseat.

Through Huntingtown—Prince Frederick.

2:48 PM

Coming into Calvert Cliffs State Park.

Parking.

Kyin exiting—standing stretching.

The two passengers exiting—standing stretching.

Looking.

The White man yawning.

“This kind of looks like Oregon—back home,” he says.

The Indian man nodding.

The men wearing armbands—the symbol sewn in blue.

2:55 PM

The three walking through the woods.

Down to the cliffs—the Chesapeake Bay.

The short beach—brown dirt-sand.

Sand-tan cliffs standing straight above.

A sign down below—at the end of the beach.

**OFF LIMITS!
HAZARDOUS
CONDITIONS
FREQUENT LANDSLIDES
AHEAD**

Kyin reaching into her bag—pulling out a camera, binoculars.

Handing the binoculars to the Indian man.

Shooting pictures.

The White man standing. “See anything?” he asks.

Shooting Kyin—shaking her head.

“Just the water,” she says.

Then continues walking—past the sign.

The beach dies out—the cliffs crumbling into the bay. Kyin walking through the water, pressing her hand against the sandy cliff wall.

The three walking climbing against the cliffs—into the woods.

3:39 PM

Coming through the woods—mud and sticks, the green towering trees.

“Hold on,” says Kyin.

The three stopping looking.

In the distance, long flat buildings—gray concrete domes.

The Indian man lifting the binoculars.

“I see it,” he says.

“No cooling towers,” he says.

Shooting Kyin.

The White man taking looking through the binoculars.

“Not your typical PWR,” he says.

“A fat screenhouse against the bay.”

The Indian man nodding.

“I thought maybe they had built a French one,” he says. “An EPR.”

The White man looking shaking his head. “Hard to say,” he says.

Then lowers the binoculars. “We can do a search once we go back,” he says.

The three standing looking.

The Indian man slapping his hands.

“Ok,” he says, “I’ve seen enough.”

Shooting Kyin.

The three turning—walking back through the woods.

6:18 PM

Coming through Maryland—into the District.

Coming up Pennsylvania—across Alabama—Minnesota.

Coming up Minnesota to Quarles.

Parking—exiting.

The three walking entering an apartment.

Kyin reaching into her pocket—pulling out keys.

“Ok,” she says—fingering the keys, “this is the apartment key—and these are the car keys.”

The White man taking the keys.

The Indian man bending picking up a stone from the floor—black—carbonado.

Handing it to Kyin.

“This fell out of your pocket,” he says.

Kyin taking pocketing the rock.

“Thanks,” she says.

The man nodding.

“I’ll visit with you guys once a week, just to see where you’re at. You can use the car as much as you like, and if you need money just give me a call. And I’ll email you the photographs that I took today.”

The men standing staring nodding.

“So the main thing, then,” says Kyin, “is that we don’t want a bomb or anything like that. Our goal is always to go undetected.”

The men nodding.

“A virus,” says the Indian man.

Grinning Kyin. “Yes,” she says, “did Darger tell you that?”

The men nodding.

Nodding Kyin. “Right,” she says. “Anything else?”

The men standing shaking their heads.

“Ok,” Kyin says.

Then walks to the door.

The men following.

“Smash jargons,” says the Indian man.

“Smash jargons,” says the White man.

Kyin turning staring—nodding.

Then turning back—exiting the apartment.

Down to Minnesota—the Metro.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

To Columbia Heights—Columbia Road—to home.

Friday, December 3rd

Cloudy, 40°

5:55 AM

A door slamming—keys jangling.

“Huh?”

Sitting Kyin.

“Oh,” she says.

Standing looking through the window—down. Cate tossing a brown bag into the trash.

Then stepping into a car—driving toward Connecticut.

Dressing Kyin.

Down and out to the trash. Sliding the bag under her coat.

6:12 AM

Mr. Dixon coming crossing the street—holding a leash, a dog.

The dog licking leaping onto Kyin.

“Down, Stasy!” says Mr. Dixon.

Smiling Kyin rubbing the dog under the ears.

Brown black German Shepherd laughing wagging.

“Good dog,” says Kyin.

Mr. Dixon lighting smoking—handing a cigarette to Kyin.

Nodding smoking Kyin.

“Stacy?” she asks.

“No, “ says Mr. Dixon. “Stasy,” he says.

6:31 AM

Into the apartment—throwing the brown bag onto the table.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:32 AM

Female anchor: Another triple homicide in the District today, the latest in a string that of shootings that have kept DC Police stumped. Three young men found dead in the Kenilworth area.

Male anchor: Also in the news, a civil war in Iraq is looking more and more likely, as Sunni and Shiite tensions rise. Today, another bombing.

Female anchor: Also in the news, a train derails in rural Russia, killing at least thirty-five.

Male anchor: In other local news, three DC Police officers have resigned their positions after being charged with extortion.

Female anchor: Coming up, Cindy gives us some tips on weight loss, and your local 5-day forecast. Will there be snow? Stay tuned for details.

To the kitchen
making coffee.

From the
refrigerator:
kimchi, tofu,
hardboiled eggs.

Rice from the rice
cooker.

To the couch.

Mutes—CCs—the screen.

6:56 AM

Carries the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email.

Email Inbox, 7:07 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

What are two driving forces of North Korea? Fear and nuclear power. There are two ways to control North Korea: 1) control fear, and/or 2) control nuclear power.

1) Control the populace. If the North Korean people do not support their regime, then the leadership will topple. How does an authoritarian regime collapse? Lack of fear. Lack of popular support. East Germany collapsed ultimately because the citizens reached a breaking point. Thousands and thousands of East Germans began fleeing to West Germany, through Hungary. Eventually, the East German leadership realized that its collapse was a fait accompli. In North Korea, citizens flee to the South, through China, but it is only a small number. Only when this number begins to reach into the tens of thousands will the North be forced to accept its fate. South Korea (actively) and China (passively) both need to work to promote this exodus.

How to actualize the North Korean populace? How to spread the virus?

A) Convince the people that their country is not tied to the land. A country is in the minds and hearts of the people. There is no such thing as a North Korean or a South Korean—there are only Koreans (Hanguk, Chosun). That border was not created by Koreans. I am a North Korean. I am a South Korean.

Email Inbox, 7:07 AM

From: Ian

All Koreans are Koreans, and a Korean is always a Korean. B) The personality cult must be peeled away. DPRK leadership lives in fear of their own people. They spend all of their money on propaganda. We must stop the propaganda machine. Show Kim Jong Il, Kim Il Sung on the toilet—shitting. Show them masturbating to old Hollywood movies. Sitting surrounded by comfort women—impotent.

Most importantly, show the Northern Koreans that Southern Koreans are not the enemy.

2) North Korea is a military state. Their main exports are military arms. Even so, those exports pale in comparison both to the US and South Korea. A homeless man with a bomb is a man whose home is that bomb. Kim Jong Il's home is his bomb. He has no land and no country. He has only himself and his bomb. We need to make the North Korean citizens realize this fact.

Brother een

Setting the computer on the coffee table.

Email Outbox, 7:09 AM

To: Ian

Ian,

What are the two driving forces of the United States? Money (class) and fame (popularity). There are 2 ways to control the US: 1) control money, and/or 2) control the media (control fame).

1) Control the populace through the media. The populace drools over celebrities.

Personalities, each with their own cult. In the US, paparazzi are leading news organizations.

The media, the news, thrives upon fame, upon instant status, instant recognition. NOW.

Every American wants to be famous. They film themselves and place themselves online, all in the hopes of a sliver of fame. Control the power to become famous, and you control America. Control celebrities, and you control America.

Celebrities are easy to manipulate—they rush to a “cause” or a “disaster.” They crave the limelight—it is a drug. Disasters and tragedies give them a place to flourish, to show how good they are at acting sad, at asking for money. “Give me money, support my fame. I’m so sad about this disaster, please support my fame.” Leech celebrities. Use their egos against them; use them, in turn, to control the populace.

Fame is the drug of America. Celebrities are the needle.

Email Outbox, 7:13 AM

To: Ian

2) Control money. The US is fundamentally a class-based society. It is the only class-based society that does not realize that it is class-based. Use this.

Money controls politics. Control money, control power. Politicians, like celebrities, are good at acting, projecting an image: “I care, tell me what to say! Tell me what you want to hear, and I’ll say it!”

We tell politicians what to say.

An American is always an American. (A Korean-American is always a Korean-American.)

By the way, I think that you should make a T-shirt that says, “I am a North Korean. I am a South Korean.” Get people in South Korea and Korean Americans to wear it.

Kyin

Opening the brown bag—the brown envelope—the folder.

Looking over the pages.

9:12 AM

Clicking open her blog.

Blog, 9:12 AM

Here is a transcription of Cate’s writing:

Attact a gat. Energy runs. Green, Blue. Attag. Tag a cat. 23 65 12 gat. The eyes and ears of owls. Owls always eat mice. Blood is a 76 or 44. 44 tag gatc.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Barry Farm.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Trinidad.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Washington Highlands.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Fairlawn.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Hillcrest.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Columbia Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Congress Heights.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Buzzard Point.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Simple City.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Clay Terrace.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Bellevue.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Deanwood.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Fort Dupont.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Benning Ridge.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Truxton Circle.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Carver Terrace.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Langston Terrace.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Shipley Terrace.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Anacostia.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Petworth.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Adams Morgan.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Kalorama.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Dupont Circle.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Mount Pleasant.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Shaw.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Eckington.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—West End.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Capitol Hill.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Georgetown.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Glover Park.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Cleveland Park.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Woodley Park.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Brookland.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—K Street.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Forest Hills.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Friendship Heights.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Chevy Chase.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Massachusetts.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Foxhall.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Shepherd Park.*
Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods—Cathedral.*

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods*—*Foggy Bottom*.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods*—*Spring Valley*.

Clicking open cameras—*Neighborhoods*—*Gold Coast*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 1*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 2*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 3*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 4*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 5*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 6*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 7*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Council Ward 8*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DCPS Chancellor*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Mayor*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DCPD Chief*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Police 1*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Police 2*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Police 3*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Police 4*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*DC Police 5*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Gang 1*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Gang 2*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 1*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 2*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 3*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 4*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 5*.

Clicking open cameras—*Houses*—*Crew 6*.

Looking over the streets and rooms.

1:25 PM

The group sitting around the table.

Malika—*Sun*—sorting photographs.

Charles—*Earth*—writing on the computer.

Patrick Walker—*Iron*—talking on a cellphone.

Lynn—*Ocean*—looking through folders.

Jason Green—*Green*—writing in a notebook.

T-Shirt—*Fire*—counting money.

Kyin—*Energy*—sorting through notebooks—reading writing.

The White man and the Indian man both sitting looking at blueprints.

2:45 PM

Standing stretching Energy reaching into her bag—pulling out envelopes.

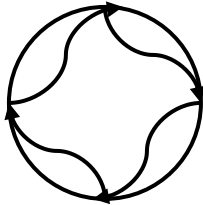
Handing out the envelopes.

“This month,” she says, “is funded by our new member from the House of Representatives.”

The group nodding opening the envelopes.

Circling Energy, reaching again into her bag—pulling out armbands and cards.

“This symbol,” she says, “will mark us.”



The group nodding. Gathering cards, sliding the armbands over their clothes.

“Hand these armbands and cards out to nodes. When you see someone wearing this, you will know that they are with us. When you see someone with this symbol, and you do not know them, go up to them and greet them. Ask them where they work, who they are with.”

Standing Energy.

“We are a virus,” she says.

The group nodding sitting.

“A virus of consciousness.

“We change the way that people think. We change the police, the gangs and crews. We change the city.”

The group nodding.

“We photograph and document. We see and listen and watch. We metastasize, moving from one neighborhood to the next.”

The group nodding.

“We have taken over Carver and Langston, Trinidad and Quarles. We are moving South and West. We are moving to Barry Farm, to Dupont Circle and the Washington Highlands. We are taking over this city, one person, one node at a time.”

The group nodding rumbling.

“We are a virus,” says Energy, raising her voice, “a cancer that is growing, changing the consciousness of this city. We will no longer accept being shot and killed by police officers and gang members. We will no longer accept being pumped full of drugs. We no longer watch our fellow citizens die on the corner, suffering from HIV, from AIDs.”

“Damn right, we won’t,” says Ocean.

“We will no longer sit and watch while money-hungry politicians pay lip service, yelling bunk and blatherskite while they line their pockets with money from corporations.”

“Fuck no, we won’t,” says Earth.

“We smash jargons,” says Energy.

“Smash jargons,” says the White man.

“Smash jargons,” says the Indian man.

“This city, this country is run on the money of the rich. This city, this country is run by the wealthy few. It is a country founded on giving money to the rich and taking it away from the poor. Fuck that. We fight against this tradition, this vicious cycle. We give money to

the poor. We say—a country is only as good as its poorest citizen. This city stomps and smashes the poor. Politicians and police and gang members gathered around all sides, punching and kicking the poor. Fuck that! We fuck them—we punch back! We kick back!”

The group nodding rumbling.

“We fuck these politicians! We fuck them!” says Energy.

“We do not buy them,” she says, “They are the ones giving money to us!”

The group nodding rumbling.

Grinning Energy.

“They beg us!” she says. “They beg us to fuck them!”

The group nodding.

“Smash jargons!” says Energy—pounding the table.

“Smash jargons!” says the group—drumming the table.

“We are self-reliant!” says Energy. “We will no longer beg the government to build our houses. What does the government do? They bulldoze these buildings! We will build our own buildings, our own neighborhoods!”

The group nodding drumming the table.

“We will build our own city. Our city! Our foundation, our nails, our hammer! Our lumber, our windows, our brick and mortar! Our arms, our hands!”

The group nodding drumming the table.

“Our backs!” says Energy, raising her voice.

“Our necks, our legs, our minds, our hearts!”

The group nodding drumming the table.

“We are a virus! We smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“We change consciousness! We act!”

The group nodding drumming pounding the table.

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

“Smash jargons!”

The drumming pounding covering their rising voices.

Monday, December 6th

Clear, 36°

9:14 AM

Crossing the Anacostia—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Exiting—climbing concrete steps. Entering through doors stained-glass.

Ocean standing smiling. “You’re early,” she says.

Nodding Energy.

The two walking through the halls.

“We’ve got one new entry over the weekend,” says Ocean. “A teenage girl—got the virus from her boyfriend.”

Nodding Energy. “What’s her name?”

“Keisha.”

Climbing stairs carpeted. Down a long hallway.

Sitting talking to the sick.

11:49 AM

Iron entering standing behind Energy.

Ocean nodding—Energy turning looking.

Nodding Iron. “Can I borrow you for a second?” he asks.

Nodding Energy—standing smiling at Ocean.

Iron and Energy exiting—walking down and out through the doors.

Sliding into a police cruiser.

12:02 PM

“Do me a favor,” says Iron, “slide down in your seat a little bit. I just want to make sure everything’s hunky-dorey.”

Down Malcolm X—side streets.

Iron parking.

“Stay here,” he says.

Exiting walking.

Then returning.

“Ok,” he says, “come on out—bring your camera.”

Energy exiting grabbing her camera.

Coming down 4th Street—crossing—pushing through trees and bushes.

“Where we going?”

“Just a second.”

Coming through the green—a brick building—green lawn unmown.

Shooting Energy.

“What is this place?” she asks.

Iron pointing, moving his arm. “This used to be a mental hospital,” he says.

“This way,” he says.

The two walking along the back of the building.

“What is it now?”

Coming upon construction equipment.

“That’s what I wanted to show you.”

Iron pointing continuing walking.

Coming to a metal door—Iron kicking the bottom and pressing in.

Entering the building—dark.

Iron reaching pulling out a flashlight.

“Hello!” he yells.

Waiting.

Silence.

“Hello!” he calls again.

Then turns to Energy.

“Come on,” he says.

Clicking on the flashlight.

The two walking through the dark halls. Must and mildew.

Stacks of metal and wood.

Shooting Energy. “What is this stuff?” she asks.

Iron continuing walking. "That's what I wanted to show you," he says. "This is—they're doing something here. They're fixing this building up. I mean," pushing through cobwebs, "they've been talking about—but now they're actually doing it."

Shooting walking Energy. "Who?"

Iron stopping turning looking at Energy.

"DHS," he says. "Homeland Security. They're making this place their main office."

Energy staring.

Iron turning continuing—climbing stairs.

Climbing Energy following calling.

"A mental hospital? They're making a mental hospital their home office?"

Iron running ahead. "Yep," he calls back, "Actually, *the* mental hospital—here," he says—pressing in a door, "look at this."

Coming into a room—bright—tall windows.

"Look at this," he says—pointing through the windows.

Energy standing shooting.

Iron looking pointing. "You can see over top of Barry Farm—across the river—the entire city."

The two standing looking.

1:07 PM

The two walking through the building.

Iron stopping sitting on a stack of lumber—wiping sweat.

"So," he says, "whad' you think? What's the plan?"

Energy sitting capping the camera.

"The plan," she says, "is to fill this building with cameras."

Turning looking at Iron.

"We'll have a whole set of nodes," she says, "and they're only job will be to watch those cameras. To tell us what DHS is doing."

Nodding grinning Iron.

Energy sitting staring at the lumber stacked.

"What we'll do," she says, "is—we'll wait until they've got the drywall in here, the ceiling tiles—whatever they're doing with the ceiling. Then we'll come in and put in our wires, our cameras."

Nodding Iron.

“So,” says Energy, “you’ll have to drive by here every day or so—check in. Where are you now?”

“I’m here,” says Iron. “Barry Farm, Congress Heights. This is my zone now. Green and Fire are running Northeast.”

Nodding Energy.

“Ok, then,” she says. “Then, I’ll leave it to you. When you’re ready for the cameras, I’ll come in with a team and set things up.”

Nodding Iron.

The two standing walking back through the darkened corridors.

Exiting the asylum.

Friday, December 10th

Light snow, 28°

7:12 PM

Knocking Kyin.

Cate coming opening the door—smiling. “Hey,” she says.

Smiling entering Kyin. To the kitchen for wine corked—uncorked. Pouring purple into glasses two.

The two standing drinking.

Drinking sitting.

9:10 PM

“I never really,” says Cate, “I never learned how to—you know? How to—act around strangers.”

Drinking Cate.

“I was—you know, more interested in books and computers. I would—I would sit—I had a little, we had a pointy roof, our house had a pointed—” holding her palm at an angle—“roof—and I would climb up and crawl in that space leftover—the space where the roof overhangs the walls.”

Cate drinking grinning looking leaning into Kyin.

“It was a tiny little space, with a tiny door—with pink panther insulation there above. I had a pillow in there and a light—I don’t remember where the light came from. And I would sit in there and take apart old telephones and calculators and read books on China

and Japan and Korea. I tore apart those machines, figuring out how they worked. Then I put them together, seeing what kinds of new machines I could make. I wanted to go to those places—”

Drinking Cate.

“I did go—to China, at least.”

Drinking Cate staring at the cushions—resting against Kyin.

10:49 PM

“Tell me about college,” says Kyin. “About graduation.”

Drinking Cate—sitting up.

“Graduation—was nice. My parents pampered me—bought me—a car. Brown. This long brown sedan with plush brown seats. They wanted me to come live with them for a while.”

“Why couldn’t you?”

“Work—I had to move down here and find a place.”

Sipping Kyin. “How’d you get your job?”

“My job—oh, I don’t like talking about that—you know?”

Cate squinting looking at Kyin.

“Just tell me a little,” says Kyin.

Drinking Cate—nodding.

“I went to a job fair at school, and I got an internship. It was for a software company. Cybersecurity, that kind of stuff. So, I worked there. Then, one day—one day, at lunch, I was talking to my boss about linguistics and computers. About computer recognition. I was talking while I was eating, but he was just sort of staring off—nodding.”

Drinking Cate—nodding.

“So, the next day, he calls me in to his office and introduces me to a woman. And the woman was from the NSA. I mean, I didn’t know it then. But she said, ‘How would you like to come work with me for a day?’ And I said, ‘Ok.’ So we took a drive down to a warehouse somewhere. This warehouse in the back of construction buildings and these eighteen-wheelers. And we go in and—and there were all these computer geeks sitting around, not even wearing office clothes, just—these—*hackers*. The kind of people that love—I mean *love*—you know?—computers. And they all worked for the NSA.

“And right away I just felt at home. I felt like—like I finally—you know?”

Cate drinking looking at Kyin. "These were people—strangers," she says, "that I felt comfortable around—you know? Like I could be myself around them."

Nodding sipping Kyin.

11:38 PM

Drinking leaning Cate.

"Come here," says Kyin.

Standing lifting Cate—over to the desk, the computer. Sitting Cate into the chair.

Kyin leaning over Cate's shoulder.

"I want you to show me something," says Kyin.

Cate with glassy eyes smiling—looking into the black reflections on the screen.

"Show you what?"

Nodding pointing Kyin. "Show me what's on here," she says.

Touching Cate's reflected face.

Cate shaking her head.

"I can't do that," she says.

"You know that," she says.

Nodding Kyin. "I know that," she says. "But just this once."

Cate leaning over the keys—turning looking at Kyin.

Cate squinting her eyes.

Then turning back—looking at the screen, the image of Kyin over her shoulder.

"I can't do that," says Cate. "Anyway—this doesn't connect directly. This is just—just an outside site. Everything on campus is shut off from the outside world. No direct line."

Nodding Kyin—touching Cate's shoulder. "Ok," she says. "But you can—just once—show me what's on here. Show me the outside site."

Cate squinting looking into the screen.

"Kyin?"

"Yes?"

"Are you—are—can I ask you a question?"

"Yes."

"Are you—I want to ask you a question about something."

"Ok."

"Are you—were you born here?"

"No."

"Are you—were you born in the US?"

"No."

"Ok. Are you—I know you're Korean."

"Yes."

"Ok. And—are you—are you—North Korean?"

Grinning Kyin.

"Yes," she says.

Cate slow nodding—reaching grabbing drinking wine.

Looking into the keyboard.

"Ok," she says.

Then looks again at the screen, the reflected images.

Drinking Cate.

"Then," she says, "are you—I mean—ok," she says.

Drinking Cate.

Clicking on the screen.

Sipping Kyin—rubbing Cate's back.

Wan willow, the pillowed west wind.

Tuesday, December 21st

Clear, 22°

7:50 AM

Coming up Minnesota—Quarles.

Stopping parking—exiting.

Knocking.

The White man opening the door—nodding.

Entering nodding Energy.

8:12 AM

The three sitting drinking coffee.

The Indian man laying out maps—blueprints—notes.

Then leaning pointing. "We want to go over several options," he says, looking up at

Energy—"Ok?"

Nodding sipping Energy.

“Ok,” says the Indian man—sitting holding a yellow notebook.

“Option one,” he says. “Calvert Cliffs is on the Chesapeake Bay. So, we can mess up that bay very badly.”

“How would we do that?”

The White man leaning. “The trick,” he says, “is to make it look like an accident. A reactor fuckup. If it snows this year, then what we can do is get onto the roof and make a leak—make it seem like the snow is causing the leak.”

The Indian man pointing to a blueprint. “The roofs of all of these buildings are flat,” he says. “That means that snow and ice gather and collect. If we get any kind of snow or ice storm, then we can make it look like the precipitation caused the leak.”

Nodding Energy. “So what—what does the leak do? What’s the goal?”

The two men nodding.

The Indian man leaning pointing. “Here,” he says, “we can short out their electricity.

They’ll have no power.”

“No power?”

The White man nodding. “I know, right? A power plant without power. But, the way it works, is that—if something goes wrong with the electricity—see,” leaning back into the cushions, “nuclear power plants are based entirely upon the idea of safety. They are basically the safest places in the world. But, the thing is, because they are so obsessive about safety—”

“Safety is their weakness,” says the Indian man. “That’s how we can attack them.”

Nodding sipping Energy.

“Exactly,” says the White man. “When something goes wrong at a nuclear power plant—anything—when anything goes wrong—then they shut down. So, if we fuckup their electricity—”

“Then they’ll shut it down,” says Energy.

The two men nodding sipping.

Sipping Energy.

“Ok, then,” she says, “so what do we do after that? Once they’ve shut themselves down?”

The Indian man nodding leaning pointing. “Yes,” he says. “that is where we begin our options. Option one is to send radioactive waste into the Chesapeake Bay. We would

make it look like it was a reactor malfunction. It would destroy the Chesapeake Bay, and even flow out into the Atlantic Ocean.”

“But this—that would be a big news event.”

The White man shrugging. “It’s hard to say,” he says. “It depends how much is leaked out. Nuclear reactor accidents—leaks—happen every year—but do you ever hear about them?”

The Indian man nodding. “Option one is the most difficult to control. Loss of coolant would cause a high level of unpredictability. Options two and three are both easier to control.”

1:12 PM

Exiting walking down Quarles—knocking.

Sun opening the door—smiling.

Entering Energy. To the kitchen—a group of women sitting eating lunch.

“Oh—hi,” says Energy.

Sun following behind.

Grabbing Energy’s arm—looking at the women.

“This is Energy,” says Sun.

The women nodding smiling.

A woman sitting wearing glasses. “What’s your real name?” she asks.

Smiling sitting Energy. “Kyin,” she says.

The woman nodding. “Nice to meet you, Kyin. My name’s Henrietta. And these ladies,” she says, turning to the women each to her right, counterclockwise, “are Marion, Regina, Deborah—and you know young Malika.”

Smiling Malika.

“These are my credit union nodes,” she says.

Deborah folding her hands, looking from Malika to Kyin. “Now what does that mean?” she asks, “‘Nodes.’ I’ve heard you say that before.”

“It’s just a word we use,” says Kyin, “so that we can single out who’s with us, who is one of us. If you’re with us, then we call you a ‘node.’ I’m a node, Malika’s a node—we’re all nodes.”

The women staring.

“I know it’s a weird sounding word,” says Kyin, “but it’s just one way—just like the symbol we wear, or carry in our pocket—it’s just another way to recognize each other. To see

who is with us. If you are talking to someone, you can say, 'Are you a node?' And if they have no clue what you're talking about, then you can move on, because you know that they're not with us. Or you can then talk to them about it, about what we're trying to do here."

The women nodding.

Henrietta cleaning her glasses. "That's fine," she says. "But what exactly are we trying to do? I know that we're here starting a credit union—but is that all? What else are we doing to help the community?"

Nodding Malika. "We're doing plenty of things, Etta. We're taking photographs, we're shutting down cops and crews, we're even starting a construction company—right?"

Malika looking at Kyin.

Nodding Kyin. "Sure," she says. "If you like, Etta, we can go over everything. And we'll show you our newspaper, too. But, really, I'm not here—everyone here has a right to tell us what we are here to do. So, it's not me or Malika coming here saying, 'Ok, this is what we're here to do.' Actually, it's the other way around. Malika's here, and I'm here, to listen, to hear what you want us to do. We want to build a foundation for you to build upon. The credit union, the newspaper, the construction, the war against the cops and crews—that's all just to give you something to build on. But, beyond that, we're asking you women to tell us what you want."

The women nodding.

Leaning Kyin. "Ladies, I mean," she says, "I came here—I didn't come here to do all of the talking. You women know way more about your neighborhoods than I could ever know. I want to know what you know, what—as much as you're willing or have the time to tell me. I'm here to listen, to learn from you. And if you don't have time now, well, you'll be seeing me at least once a week when I come over to the credit union."

The women smiling.

"Ok," says Regina, "what would you like us to talk about?"

Smiling Kyin. "Anything, really. How has the neighborhood changed? How has it stayed the same? What do you think of the New Communities Initiative? What would you like to change? What would you like to stay the same?"

Malika standing—opening the refrigerator. "I'm going to make us something," she says.

"I think," says Etta, "that any change is good change. I don't care what they do. So long as they are doing something, it's better than nothing. They've spent so much time ignoring us over here in Ward 7, Ward 8, that any kind of acknowledgement is worthwhile."

Deborah nodding. "I think they could—look at some of these streets," she says, "if you walk around or take a drive down these streets, all you see is old busted up buildings and abandoned lots. We need to just wipe the slate clean."

Smiling Kyin. "It's funny," she says, "because when I talk to some of the men—there's a group of men I talk to, up in Park Morton—Georgia—and—I ask them about these kinds of things, about the New Communities Initiative, about things like that, and most of them say just the opposite. That they don't want—they're afraid that they'll be priced out of their own homes, pushed out into PG County, the suburbs."

The women nodding.

"Don't I know it," says Regina, "we all heard it before, that kind of talk."

Marion learning looking at Kyin. "Kyin," she says, "anything is better than nothing. Some people like to keep other people down. Some people like to stay down, because they think going up is bad. So they try to keep everyone else down with them. If you live in a place like this long enough, as long as we have, then you see that anything, any change is better than nothing. I don't care if they get it done or not, at least they're trying. And that's more than I can say for most people. Some people never want to change anything."

Smiling Deborah looking at Kyin. "If you think we all agree, you're wrong. Regina is all for housing the homeless and ex-cons, but I know it's a waste of city money coming in here and crowding out our neighborhood. Why don't they put homeless housing in Georgetown or Dupont Circle or Capitol Hill? Why do they have to send those ex-cons over here to us?"

"They're not sending them to Georgetown," says Regina, "you're crazy if you think that will ever happen. I'm about being realistic, helping people that need helped. You all know my son and what he went through. We have enough rundown buildings over here, I don't see why the homeless can't live in one of them. And it's not like these are violent criminals. And it isn't like we don't already have criminals around here anyhow."

"That's just my point. We got enough as it is. And it's not just the building," says Deborah, "it's the money and the—it's what they bring with them."

"You know," says Marion, "we can say that it's about being positive or negative, but sometimes it's hard to be optimistic when you've never seen much good happen. I'm not

talking down those people that are against change, that are negative. I understand where they come from, I do. My brother talks the same way. It's good you two are asking others what they think. Sometimes the first thing that people hear over here is negativity, and they take that and run with it."

Nodding Kyin. "We don't want a bandaid simple solution," she says. "We want to hear what you really think."

"Just as often," says Etta, "you hear people who don't listen to anything negative. If you say anything bad—anything at all—watch out! They'll tear your head off."

"The problem," says Deborah, "so as I see it, is that they don't have God in their lives.

These boys need strong mothers and fathers who will teach them about God."

The women nodding.

"Do you go to Church?" asks Deborah.

Leaning back—Kyin shaking her head. "No," she says. "I did when I was a kid. My mom took me."

"But you believe in the Lord, don't you?"

Shrugging Kyin.

The women shaking their heads.

Sunday, January 2nd

Clear, 20°

11:17 PM

Coming up West Virginia. Brick buildings and warehouses.

A large lot of cars parked.

<p>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA VEHICLE MAINTENANCE COMPLEX</p>
--

A cruiser coming stopping.

Energy stepping into the back.

Green and Fire sitting in front.

Driving passing a cemetery. Turning down 17th Street—parking.

Energy leaning saying, "A new year," she says.

The two nodding.

"They all blend together," says Green.

Energy opening a notebook.

"So—ok, you've cut back on triples, right?"

The two nodding.

"Good," says Energy. "And now—what's the situation here?"

"Tomorrow," says Fire, "we'll do two doubles—one in Trinidad, one over in Shipley."

Nodding Energy. "Ok—who's that?"

"That's—Trinidad is pretty much cleared out," says Green. "I mean—we've got it where we want it right now. When we drive around, they know it's us. They know we own this zone."

"And Carver Langston," says Fire.

Nodding Green.

"Ok," says Energy writing nodding, "so where does that put us? What zones do we control over here?"

"I mean," says Fire, "it's hard to say til summer comes. Right now, though, it's as we own the whole Northeast. After tomorrow—when we lay down those two—those are two big boys. So when we lay them down, right there for errybody to see—that's it. We own this."

Nodding Energy. "Ok," she says. "And then—then we'll just lay low over the rest of the winter."

"Exactly," says Green.

Grinning Energy. "Ok," she says. "This is all good news—good news. And you're—you all are keeping up with Iron?"

Nodding Green. "We meet up once every couple days. We'll meet up with him tomorrow night, after we hit Shipley."

Nodding writing Energy looking up.

"Ok," she says, "that's about it—you can drop me off down Florida."

Nodding Green—pulling out onto Montana.

Coming down New York—Florida.

Energy leaning looking at Fire looking back over his shoulder.

"There's one other thing I need," she says.

Nodding Fire looking at Green.

“What’s that?” asks Green.

Energy looking into the mirror.

“A gun,” she says.

Driving Green glancing up into the rear-view mirror—nodding.

Tuesday, January 11th

Clear, 25°

6:44 AM

Into the apartment. Throwing the brown bag onto the coffee table.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:47 AM

Male anchor: More trouble with Metro today, as a Green Line train went off the tracks, injuring two and killing one.

Female anchor: Also in the news, the DC Council has approved a new measure implementing after-school programs for all public schools. This comes after a long fight with the Mayor and the DC School Chancellor.

Male anchor: In other news, North Korea is growing closer to China. This follows upon a failed currency reform measure that has angered many North Korean citizens. Some analysts say that this move may be a gateway to capitalism in the country.

Female anchor: Also in the news, a new report today detailing the high rate of suicides among US soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is the highest suicide rate among active US soldiers in the history of the country, more than double the national rate.

To the kitchen making coffee.

Rice from the rice cooker.
Cracking an egg into a pan.

Sliding rice onto a plate—egg—gochujang.
Pouring coffee.

Carrying the plate, the mug to the couch.

Mutes—CCs the screen.

6:58 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicks open her email.

Email Inbox, 6:58 AM

From: Ian

Kyin,

The key is Hamhung. I've formed a group. One of our members defected from the North. He will show us the way. We are taking a fishing boat along the coast at night, moving from Goseong. The coast is all mountains. Crossing the border, there are a group of islands off Wonsan. We will move up during the night, landing on these islands. Then, the next night, we will continue up the Northern coast. From there, we will work our way up the bay, up the river into Hamhung.

Hamhung is ripe for uprising! I can feel it! This is the beginning, Kyin. I know it. Hamhung is a city ravaged by famine and methamphetamine. The government has made their money worthless. They are angry! They see blackmarket South Korean dramas, they see how comfortable Southern Koreans live, and now they are asking questions. They want to live that way.

We will work the people there, spreading like a drug. We will feed their anger. The time is ripe. You can call me crazy, I don't care, but this is something that I believe in. Northern Koreans are starving and dying, and we sit and do nothing! Not anymore! To Hamhung! We leave in two days.

I don't really care anymore if I live or die. It's not worth living to sit here and do nothing. Every day since I was born, all I've done and can do is think about the Northern Koreans. I've realized that I can't do anymore thinking—that this thinking is driving me crazy. I need to move out of my thoughts and into the world. I thought that I could do this alone, that I should do this alone. But I've found a few Southern Koreans that feel the same way that I do, along with a defector from the North. We have planned this carefully, but still, we are realistic about our chances. We realize that hope of survival is slim. But what else am I to do? Live my life here, doing nothing? Sitting thinking—doing nothing?

I don't understand the world anymore, Kyin. I never did, I guess. What kind of world is this? A place where millions of our brothers and sisters are dying, starving, living as slaves and prisoners—and we do nothing? I can't live in that kind of world. I won't. If it is crazy to be unable to live in this world, then I am crazy.

Email Inbox, 7:13 AM

From: Ian

If it is crazy to be unable to forget about the slaughter of millions of our brothers and sisters, then I am crazy. If it is crazy to be unable to live in a throw-away world—throwing away food and money, all while our Northern brothers and sisters are scraping the dirt for food—then I am crazy.

What are we supposed to do? Are we supposed to sit and wait for governments, for presidents and diplomats, corporations (Kaesong—where Southern Koreans use Northern Koreans as slaves!) make promises of “discussions” and “talks” and “meetings” and “agreements”—all while millions live in poverty and desolation, dying?

NO! We cannot wait for governments to heal this divide, to break this line. The people must do something.

Sometimes I grow hopeful, thinking that when Kim Jong Il dies, the country will open. Either through Kim Jong Nam, or through the failure of the people to accept the new leader (Kim Jong Un?). Are we supposed to wait for Kim Jong Nam, friend of China? So then what? China and NK will grow closer—will that open North Korea? Perhaps Jang Sung Taek will act as Krushchev, smashing the personality cult. Perhaps someday these things will happen. But someday is not now. We cannot sit and wait. We will not.

Of course, I've let you down. You have a very powerful way of convincing people to follow you, of showing them that they've disappointed you. I hate disappointing you, Kyin. I am sorry for that. I've disappointed you, haven't I? With my love for Koryo? I hate that feeling, the feeling I get when I see that look on your face. I saw it the last time we were together, sitting in Dupont Circle. I talked about father as a spy, and your face—immediately, I could see it on your face, that look. Now I can see you reading this letter, getting that look again. This will be the last time.

Sarang hae,
Brother een

Closes the computer.

Dresses, packs. Socks, jeans, belt, shoes, button-up, notebook, camera, sweater, jacket, gun.

Exits the apartment, the building.

7:50 AM

Coming up Minnesota—Quarles.

Stopping parking—exiting.

Knocking.

The Indian man opening the door—nodding.

Entering Energy.

8:10 AM

The three sitting drinking coffee.

“Change of plans,” says Energy.

The two men leaning drinking listening.

“We’re going to do something visible with Calvert Cliffs. Something so that—so that we will remain invisible, our fingerprints. But it will be something big, something that cannot be covered up. It will be something that makes them—the nuclear commission—the plant—the government—responsible.”

The two sitting staring.

“Option One,” she says.

“Loss of electricity,” she says. “Loss of coolant.”

The two men looking to each other—then to Energy.

Energy leaning looking from each to each.

“I want to be clear here,” she says.

“Our goal is not to cost civilian lives. If I could, I’d send this straight to Congress—a pipeline,” sipping Energy, “but that’s not possible. So—keeping that in mind, I mean—collateral damage is something, unfortunately, that we have to accept.”

“A virus,” says the Indian man.

“A virus,” says the White man.

Nodding Energy.

“A virus,” she says.

Leaning back into the couch.

“If we have to,” she says, “if we don’t get a big snowstorm, then we’ll have to wait until the rainy season—March, April. In this area, it rains nearly every day in early spring. So, what we’ll do, we’ll look for a week when we see reports of flooding in the area and—and then we’ll strike.”

The two nodding gripping their mugs.

Energy again leaning.

"Only you two will know about this. Don't email Darger about this, and don't tell any of the other nodes. From here on out, you won't show up at meetings, you won't be seen anywhere."

The two slow nodding.

"I realize," says Energy, "that Sun lives just down the street—so, if you see her, just act normal. But she's to have no knowledge of this operation."

The two nodding. The Indian man taking notes—Energy grabbing his hand.

"No notes, either," she says.

The Indian man nodding.

Energy leaning back into the couch.

"This is the event," she says. "This will be what we have been waiting for. This will send a virus to Washington. A virus poisoning the symbolic people. Those who speak in tongues, in jargons."

The two nodding.

"A week before the event," says Energy, "you will let me know of the date and time. On the same day, at the same time, a node will be sent to the NSA at Fort Meade. That node will be strapped with an electromagnetic bomb."

The two sitting staring.

Sipping Energy.

"So," she says, "from now until that day, we will be making that bomb. Can you do this?"

The two slow nodding.

The Indian man looking to the White man.

"There are a—we will have to collaborate with another node—on the West Coast."

Nodding Energy.

"Ok—go ahead and have the node sent over. I'll be coming over here more often, so I can explain things. Email Darger, let him know about the node, but don't tell him any of the details about either the Fort Meade or Calvert Cliffs."

The two nodding.

"Don't trust email. Don't trust phones."

Energy leaning holding out her fist.

"Smash jargons," she says.

"Smash jargons," says the Indian man.

“Smash jargons,” says the White man.

The two leaning forward, pressing their own fists against Energy’s.

12:08 PM

Coming up Connecticut. Into the building.

Into the apartment. To the kitchen for water cold.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Searches—“e-bomb,” “electromagnetic pulse bomb,” “emp bomb.”

Searches, reads, refines.

4:39 PM

Closes the computer.

Lies flat on the couch—rolling onto her side.

Dozes—sleeps.

Thursday, January 20th

Cloudy, 35°

9:10 AM

Coming down Kentucky—South Carolina.

Eastern Market.

Booths and stalls of fruit, bread, vegetables, meat, jewelry, furniture.

Bodies crowding pushing talking eating.

Ordering a bagel, lox—bagged.

10:07 AM

Down South Carolina—Garfield Park.

Sitting on a bench—opening the bag.

Eating the lox, bagel.

10:19 AM

A Councilman coming sitting on the bench—nodding.

Nodding chewing Kyn.

“I noticed,” she says, she swallows, “that you did a nice job with the after-school program.”

The Councilman smiling. “Thank you,” he says.

“Glad to help,” he says.

Nodding chewing Kyin.

“Next project,” she says, “is a work program. We’ll set up right in the heart of Anacostia. Teach people how to write resumes, dress for interviews, look for the right kinds of jobs—all of that. After that, we begin computer training.”

The Councilman nodding smiling. “I like that,” he says.

Nodding swallowing Kyin. “Your voters will like it, too. What about that building contract?”

The Councilman staring. “Which contract is that?” he asks.

Biting Kyin. “Buzzard Point,” she says.

The Councilman nodding. “Oh—yes,” he says. “Thing is, I can’t—the holdup is that I can’t make anything official until I get an official bid from your company. And your company has to be officially licensed. So, I’ve been holding back the bidding process until your man brings me the correct paperwork.”

Chewing swallowing Kyin. “He hasn’t contacted you yet?”

The Councilman shaking his head.

Nodding Kyin reaching into her bag—pulling out a phone.

Placing a call.

Call, 10:39 AM

Earth: Energy?

Energy: Hey, Earth. I’m sitting here with the Councilman from the Housing Committee. He says he’s waiting on you sending him the correct forms.

Earth: Yeah—I’m working on it.

Energy: Ok—can you get it to him by the end of the week? The sooner you get it to him, the sooner we get the Buzzard Point Contract.

Earth: Yeah, ok. Tell him I’ll have it to him—what’s today, Thursday?

Energy: Yep.

Earth: Ok, tell him by next—by Tuesday. I’ll bring it down to Freedom myself.

Energy: I’ll right. Ok, I’ll check in with you—actually, I’ll just see you next monthly meeting, alright?

Earth: Alright, Energy. Nice talking with you.

Energy: Peace.

Biting.

Chewing.

Swallowing.

Closing the phone.

“He’ll have it by next Tuesday,” says Kyin.

"If he doesn't bring it," she says, "give me a call."

The Councilman nodding.

"Ok," he says.

Nodding biting Kyin.

Friday, February 4th

Light snow, 26°

10:33 AM

The group sitting around the table.

Sun—uploading photographs.

Earth—writing on the computer.

Iron—talking on a cellphone.

Ocean—looking through folders.

Green—writing in a notebook.

Fire—counting money.

Energy—sorting through notebooks—reading writing.

11:52 AM

Energy standing walking leaning over Sun.

A picture of a man on the screen.

"Who's that?" she says, she points.

Sun clicking. "I'm just now looking him up," she says, she types.

"Let's see," she says.

Clicking searching the database.

"Here we are," she says—bringing up a file. "We have him—five photographs—let's see," clicking, "photographed in Kenilworth by *Andromeda* on June 15th last year, photographed off Nannie Helen Avenue by *Arcturus* on November 12th last year, filmed in Condon Terrace by *Nile* on April 22nd this year, photographed in Eckington by *Coal* on August 19th this year, and—this new one," she says, leaning into the screen, "is—again by *Andromeda*, this past Monday, this time just off Minnesota Avenue."

Nodding sitting Energy. "What do we know about this guy? Why is he visiting all these different parts of the city?"

Nodding typing clicking Sun. "Yeah," she says, "it's odd. Most people we have show up in the same area."

Ocean coming standing leaning.

"He looks familiar," she says.

"Who's Andromeda?" asks Energy.

Clicking Sun. "She's one of mine," she says, "yeah—a high school girl. Found out what we're doing—one day showed up at my door, asking to join. She brings me nodes from her high school. Mostly girls."

Ocean shaking her head.

"No," she says, "I don't know him," she says, walking back to her seat.

12:26 PM

Energy sitting talking with Iron.

"Just this week," he says, nodding. "They've begun kicking it into high-gear. See dumptrucks and backhoes, bringing them down MLK, all along that brick wall they've got. I'm thinking, they're getting ready for the spring. They'll start tearing up the dirt, digging."

"What about the inside? What kind of work they doing in there?"

Nodding Iron. "This is a huge campus—right? I mean, I haven't even been inside every building of that place. So, I mean, it's hard to say. I've got two nodes working with me over there, and we're trying to get in and see as much as we can. The problem is, now that they're fixing this place up, there's a lot more people around, and security's getting tighter. I mean, by the time they're done, this place will be like a supermax.

"They're like ants over there—but, the good news is—all of—most of these guys working I'm betting are just contractors—hired help. So, at least for now, security's got plenty of weak spots."

Nodding Energy. "When do you think they'll have the drywall up?"

Nodding Iron. "I'm thinking sometime around—probably about month from now—maybe a week or two sooner than that, but not much. Thing is, we're gonna have to be quick about it. Because, I have—I just have this feeling, pretty soon that place will be locked down tight."

1:35 PM

Energy standing tossing envelopes.

"This month," she says, "is paid for by the esteemed Councilwoman from Northeast."

The group nodding collecting the envelopes.

Monday, February 7th

Light snow, 19°

7:32 AM

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open—*Community Chorus*.

***COMMUNITY CHORUS
YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
YOUR NEWS
YOUR VOICE***

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 7TH

***If you would like to contribute to COMMUNITY CHORUS, please send an email to: myvoice@communitychorus.org
WE WELCOME YOUR VOICE!***

QUARLES NEWS

Malika

Top News Story

The Credit Union is open! Come on in and open an account!

We officially opened this morning at 8 AM!

The official name is: **Northeast/Southeast Credit Union**

Or: **NE/SE Credit Union (NESECU)**.

NESE (as we call it), is staffed by: Regina, Deborah, Henrietta, and Marion.

We are looking for more workers! Come on by for a job! We pay decent!

STOP USING PAYDAY LOANS!

STOP GIVING AWAY YOUR CAR TITLES!

COME ON DOWN TO NESE!

As you can see, I'm excited about NESE, but there is other news.

Weather

Snow on the ground in Deanwood, Kenilworth, and other parts of far Northeast.

Light flurries. Children running around playing.

Announcements

We're having a bean soup cook-off! The first weekend of March!

See who can cook the best bean soup!

COMMUNITY CHORUS

Crime

No crime to report this week!

Ezekiel Wilson is getting out of prison this week. His mother asks that those who are able come by and say hello to Zeke.

TRINIDAD, CARVER, LANGSTON NEWS

Jason and Calvin

Top News Story

The Mayor has announced plans to bring the New Communities Initiative (NCI) to Langston Terrace. We are doing something about this.

Langston Terrace was the first Housing Project in the US. It was designed by a Black architect. Did you know that?

Back then, the government and architects believed that if people were poor or struggling, then living in beautiful surroundings would uplift their spirits, lifting them out of poverty.

Pretty crazy, right?

Announcements

Road construction on Montello and Bladensburg. This looks like it will last at least a month or so. I don't know why they're doing this in the winter with snow on the ground. I have a feeling that they will stop soon and just leave the equipment out until it gets warm. Rasheeda Brown wants everyone to know that her daughter just had a baby boy.

Crime

A mugging two nights ago, reported by Eli Thomas.

We're on it, Eli! We got your back.

GEORGIA AVENUE NEWS

Charles

Park Morton is going down. I say by the middle of the summer it will be gone, and by next winter it will be all replaced with shiny new "Mixed Communities." Well, I have "mixed" feelings about all this, but what can you do? We're doing our best here, folks, but we can't work magic!

Announcements

Nothing to announce. It's too cold for that!

Crime

No crime that I know of. It's too cold for that! Send me an email if you know of any.

COMMUNITY CHORUS

HOMELESS NEWS

Guest column: Moses

Hello, my name's Moses. I've been living in this city since as long as I've been alive. I left only once, and that was to serve my time over in Vietnam. When I was growing up, I used to play over in U Street, hanging out with my friends. Around the time I went to war was around the time of the riots. So when I came back here, things were different. Growing up, my father worked as a machinist down in the Navy Yard. Back then, the Navy Yard was the job to get. Building ships, things like that. We lived over in Anacostia, that's where most Navy Yard men lived. All these Navy Yard families living together, White and Black. All our houses even looked the same. Then, the Yard closed down, and I was off to Vietnam.

When I came back, I moved around from job to job, trying to find a place. I worked for a while as a mechanic, and in the summers I would work extra time over at RFK selling peanuts and whatnot. That was a great time, because I'd get to see the Skins games.

Somehow I lost track of things and now here I am. I still work odd jobs now and then, but it's hard to get by in this city. I just have none of the skills that they need.

Computers and all that. When I was young, I could rent a place for around \$100 a month—and that was a nice place! It's got to now where it is in DC that you can't even rent a place unless you're a rich man.

Thank you all for reading my column. Take care of yourselves.

Moses.

BARRY FARM NEWS

Patrick

They're coming in here, tearing down Barry Farm. Wrecking balls and all that. It's over and down now, so that's another battle lost, even if it is a battle which we didn't know if we wanted to fight it or not.

Announcements

You won't believe it. An actual restaurant in Congress Heights!

The name of the restaurant is "Pete's Place," which I'm assuming is the name of the owner (or his son?). If you know, then send me an email. I'm planning on visiting tomorrow, so next week I'll post reviews from anyone who emails in. Check it out!

COMMUNITY CHORUS

Crime

Crime in the winter? Not in Barry Farm.

I still haven't got the hang of writing this, so that's all from me. Send me emails, readers, so I don't have to write!

HIV/AIDS CLINIC NEWS

Lynn

I have to thank all of my new volunteers and workers. You all are a blessing. With our funding, we even have now young students coming in from Georgetown and Howard, offering their services and training.

It's getting harder for me, as I've been down a lot recently, not feeling my best.

Unfortunately, I am now a patient at this clinic.

Other than myself, no new admissions this week.

I apologize, but I am just too tired to write. This illness really takes everything out of you.

Peace.

Closes the computer.

Dresses, packs. Socks, jeans, belt, shoes, button-up, notebook, camera, sweater, jacket, gun.

Exits the apartment, the building.

10:15 AM

Coming up MLK.

Climbing concrete steps.

Bodies bustling. A woman walking up to Energy.

"Hello," she says, "are you looking for Ocean?"

Nodding Energy.

The woman leading Energy up the stairs—down a hall.

Into a room.

The woman pointing to a bed.

Energy walking to the bed.

Sleeping Ocean.

Tubes and wires taped to skin and nose.

1:18 PM

“Energy.”

“Energy.”

“Kyin!”

“Huh?”

Kyin waking looking at Lynn.

“Oh,” says Kyin.

Smiling Lynn. “You fell asleep,” she says.

Kyin stretching smiling turning to look out the window.

“It’s the sunlight,” she says.

Lynn pushing herself to sitting. Standing Kyin helping adjust the pillow.

“Thanks,” says Lynn.

Sitting Kyin.

“So?”

“So,” says Lynn, coughing, “It’s this—it’s fullblown now,” she says, she coughs.

Kyin standing pouring a glass of water—handing it to Lynn.

Lynn drinking, saying, “Thanks,” she says.

“At least,” she says, “that’s what they say.”

Nodding sitting Kyin.

“Fullblown,” she asks, “so what’s that mean? Explain it to me—I don’t know much about this stuff.”

“It means, as the doctors say, I’ve reached the SOL stage.”

“Ok, so—what’s that?”

Smiling Lynn.

“Shit outta luck,” she says.

Smiling frowning Kyin.

“Oh,” she says, “that SOL.”

4:32 PM

Coming up Minnesota—Quarles.

Stopping parking—exiting.

Knocking.

The White man opening the door—nodding.

Entering Energy.

The Indian man standing next to a Chinese man.

4:52 PM

The four sitting drinking coffee, tea.

“What I—the main thing that I need to know,” says the Chinese man, “is what—how much room do I have? How is this bomb going to be carried? In a bag? A suitcase? A—a what?”

Nodding Energy. “A car,” she says. “The trunk of a car.”

The Chinese man nodding writing. “Ok,” he says. “Good. Now what kind of car? A wagon? A two-door? A—a what?”

Leaning sipping Energy. “A four-door sedan,” she says.

The Chinese man nodding writing. “Ok—good. And—and what—how will it be put into the car? Who—how will it go in there?”

“I will put it in there. So I have to be able to lift it by myself.”

“Ok—good. And is this—do we want to—do I need to make it explode on impact?—how will. Will it explode from a crash—or ignition—or—or what?”

“We need it to explode from a timer.”

“Ok—good.”

The Chinese man nodding writing.

Energy looking across at the Indian man, the White man.

The two sitting sipping—studying blueprints.

5:20 PM

The Chinese man stopping writing.

Looking at Energy.

“Ok,” he says, “if it is—if you have to be able to lift it, then I am not sure how much—what the destruction radius will be. EMP bombs are—they have been used, but only a few times. They are mostly theoretical. And most EMP bombs—are nuclear, which, obviously, we cannot do. Also, most EMP bombs are dropped from above—” holding his palm in the air— “From a plane—so—so it’s hard to say what kind of damage this bomb will do, coming from the earth. That is really as specific as I can get.”

Nodding Energy. “That’s fine,” she says. “We will just have to try out best.”

The Chinese man nodding.

Sipping Energy.

Thursday, February 17th

Snow showers, 25°

9:12 AM

Coming up Malcolm X—side streets.

Walking up to a police cruiser sitting parked.

Soft snow, a knit blanket.

Knocking on the windshield.

Iron looking through the glass—grinning.

Then stepping out.

“Scared the shit outta me,” he says.

Holding cups of coffee, two. Handing a cup to Energy.

“Thanks,” she says—taking the cup.

The two turning walking—pushing through the bushes, the briars.

The two walking around behind the building brick.

Kicking in the bottom of a metal door.

Iron standing next to the lightswitch.

“Hello!” he yells.

“Hello!” again.

Waiting.

Flicking on the switch.

Turning to Energy. “See,” he says, “they already got the lights on,” sipping coffee, turning walking, “I knew it, too. Once they get motivated, they don’t fuck around.”

Nodding sipping Energy.

The two coming through the halls—up the stairs.

“As soon as spring comes,” says Iron, “they’ll be going to town on this place. I mean,” glancing back at Energy, “we really need to step things up.”

Coming up into a room—flicking on the switch.

“What we really need,” says Iron, “is a big crew in here, getting—”

“Hello!”

The two stopping listening.

"Hello—is somebody here!"

Steps distant down below.

Iron unholstering his gun, pointing waving to Energy, mouthing—*move back*.

Then flicking off the lights.

Energy stepping back behind the entrance.

Iron moving back into an open closet.

"Hello!"

"This is Federal Government property!"

"Hello!"

"If someone's in here, they need to get out now!"

"Hello!"

The steps drawing closer—stopping at the stairwell.

"Hello—are you up there?"

"Is someone up there?"

"Hello!"

The voice quiet.

"Fucking shit," says the voice.

Silence.

The sound of steps coming onto the stairs.

Iron widening his eyes—motioning for Energy to step back.

Energy standing still.

"Hello!"

"Backup is on the way—just come out and I'll let you go, ok!"

Coming near up the stairs.

"Look!—is someone really here!"

"Because—"

The voice stopping.

A White man standing in the entryway.

"Hello?" he says.

"Fucking shit," he says, he whispers—touching his holstered gun.

Flicking on the lights.

Then stepping out into the room, snapping open the holster—Energy quick throwing coffee against his cheek—the man turning into her swinging punching him in the adam’s apple—Iron coming tackling the man, pinning him down.

The man heaving gasping struggling.

Energy quick reaching into her bag pulling out her gun—putting it against the man’s head.

“Quiet,” she says.

“Quiet down,” she says—pressing the barrel against the temple.

Then looking up at Iron.

“Go call Green and Fire,” she says. “Get them down here quick.”

11:19 AM

Green and Fire carrying the body to their cruiser—placing it into the trunk.

Then coming back—standing next to Energy and Iron.

Nodding Iron.

Fire and Green nodding each.

“Someone have a smoke?” asks Energy.

Green reaching into his pocket—handing Energy a cigarette.

Fire holding out a lighter—lighting the end.

Nodding Energy.

“Thanks,” she says—glancing over at the trunk.

Green and Fire nodding.

Energy inhaling—exhaling.

Smoke rising through flakes falling fat.

“What we need,” she says—looking at Iron, “is to get this shit—these cameras—done real quick.”

Nodding Iron.

Energy looking over at the trunk.

Inhaling—exhaling.

Snow casting down through the blue smoke.

Into her black hair made wet.

“Like fucking yesterday,” she says.

Tuesday, March 1st

Drizzle, 48°

8:20 AM

Coming up Minnesota.

Into a parking lot.

The sign on the building blue and white.

<p>NESE NORTHEAST/SOUTHEAST CREDIT UNION</p>

Entering through glass doors.

A lobby—carpet, linoleum.

Women, two, waiting behind the long counter.

Etta and Marion.

“Good morning, Ms. Kyin,” says Etta.

Smiling Kyin. “Good morning, Ms. Etta,” she says.

Smiling Etta.

“Good morning, Ms. Kyin,” says Marion.

Smiling nodding Kyin. “Good morning, Ms. Marion,” she says.

Standing at the counter.

“And how can we help you today?” asks Marion.

Kyin reaching into her bag—pulling out an envelope.

From the envelope—a check.

“Today,” she says, “is the first-of-the-month check. From our dear Senator.”

Marion nodding—taking the check.

Typing on a computer.

“Now, Kyin,” says Etta, folding her hands, “I have to ask—have you been to church recently?”

Smiling Kyin looking over at Etta.

“No,” she says.

“Not recently,” she says.

Nodding Etta. “I know you haven’t,” she says.

“Here you are,” says Marion—handing Kyin a receipt.

“Thank you,” says Kyin—taking dropping the receipt into her bag.

Then turning walking toward the exit.

“Get going to church,” says Etta. “Before the devil gets ahold of you.”

Smiling waving Kyin.

“Goodbye ladies,” she says. “Peace be with you.”

“And with you,” they call out.

9:45 AM

Coming down Quarles.

Knocking.

The Chinese man opening the door—nodding.

Entering Energy.

The White man standing next to the Indian man.

9:59 AM

The four sitting drinking tea, coffee.

The White man leaning pointing at a newspaper.

“It’s been raining for a week,” he says.

Nodding Energy.

The Indian man sipping.

“A flood watch is in effect,” he says.

Nodding sipping Energy—looking across at the Chinese man.

“When will you be ready?” she asks.

The Chinese man sipping.

“Five days,” he says.

Nodding Energy—looking from each to each.

“A week, then,” she says.

“The morning of 3/8,” she says.

Friday, March 4th

Cloudy, 47°

1:20 PM

The group sitting gathered around the table.

Standing Energy.

“So—from now on,” she says, “Our funding will go directly into the credit union. So that—so, funds will be sent directly from the government to each of your branches.”
The group sitting nodding.

1:45 PM

Energy sitting talking with Earth.

“The way it’s looking now,” says Earth, “is we’ll be getting started around the first of next month.”

Nodding Energy. “And you have—what? What’s your crew looking like?”

Earth picking up holding a notebook—flipping through the pages.

“Is that,” asks Energy, “do you put all that,” pointing to the notebook, “into the computer?”

Nodding Earth looking up at Energy. “Yeah,” he says, “I mean—I’m slow about it, to be straight with you. I guess I just prefer writing things down with a pencil.”

Nodding Energy. “No,” she says, “I have no problem with that, just—if you—if it’s easier, just hire someone to enter it for you, to keep track of it.”

Earth nodding—rubbing his chin.

2:17 PM

Iron coming up behind Energy.

“Can I borrow you for a second?” he asks.

Energy turning looking. “Sure,” she says.

Standing Energy placing her hand on Earth’s shoulder.

“I’ll catch up with you,” she says.

Earth nodding.

2:21 PM

Stepping into a police cruiser.

Coming down Minnesota—Pennsylvania—New Jersey.

Stopping parking near the Navy Yard.

Energy looking asking, “What’re we doing here?”

Iron pointing straight ahead.

“Do me a favor,” he says, “and walk down over there about half a block.”

Energy following his pointing.

“Down that way?” she asks, she points.

Nodding Iron. “Yep,” he says. “I can’t come—you’ll see why.”

Nodding Energy exiting the vehicle.

Walking toward the water.

2:32 PM

Coming to a crowd of DC Police, Federal Agents, ambulances.

Energy approaching a group of officers standing talking. Reaching into her bag—pulling out a recorder.

Holding the recorder out toward the standing officers.

“Hello,” she says—the officers turning—“what’s going on here?”

An officer coming close. “You a reporter?” he asks.

Nodding Energy. “I’m with *Community Chorus*,” she says.

The officer nodding, holding his belt.

“Seems they found a body down there,” he says. “Washed up in the river.”

“Oh, wow—who—do they know, have they identified the body?”

The officer looking staring.

“No,” he says, “but he was wearing a uniform.”

“A uniform? What kind of uniform?”

The officer backing walking away. “I’m sorry, ma’am, that’s all I can tell you. You’re gonna have to wait until they come out for a press release.”

“Hold on a second—I mean—what did he look like?”

The officer shrugging walking away.

“He was White,” he calls out.

2:54 PM

Coming up New Jersey.

Into the police cruiser.

Sitting Iron.

Energy sitting turning asking, “Do you know something I don’t?”

Iron nodding.

“The body they found,” he says, he turns, “that’s ours. The guy from DHS building. The one Green and Fire were supposed to get rid of.”

Energy turning looking out the windshield.

“Ah, shit,” she says.

Saturday, March 5th

Cloudy, 47°

6:12 AM

Looking down on the street.

Cate coming tossing the brown bag into the trash.

Then walking stepping into a sedan—driving up to Connecticut.

Kyin pulling on a jacket.

Down and out to the trash—sliding the bag under her coat.

6:22 AM

Mr. Dixon coming standing.

Stasy hopping licking Kyin's hands.

"Good girl," says Kyin—rubbing behind the ears.

6:35 AM

Into the apartment—tossing the brown bag onto the table.

News, 6:35 AM

Female anchor: In other news, DC Police are looking for any information on the murder of Jeremy Hill. Hill was a DC Police officer working extra time as a security guard for the new DHS building over in Southeast. Tanya has more.

Reporter: DC Police are angry. [cut to DC Police officer] "We always wanna catch criminals, but when it's one of your own, you know, you just work that much harder." [cut to DC Police Chief] "We know someone must've seen something, they're just not saying anything. A body doesn't just end up in the River without anyone seeing anything." [cut to reporter] DC Police are urgently calling for help in finding the murderer of this man. Unfortunately, as it is now, they have no leads. Back to you.

Female anchor: Thanks, Tanya. That's a sad story. Up next, the weather.

Clicks on the news.

To the kitchen
making tea.

Cracking an egg
into a pan.

From the rice
cooker—rice.

Sliding the egg onto
rice.

Ketchup.

Gochujang.

Carrying the plate,
the mug, to the
couch.

Mutes—CCs—the screen.

7:56 AM

Coming up West Virginia.

A cruiser pulling up stopping.

Energy stepping into the back.

Green and Fire sitting in front.

Driving passing a cemetery. Turning down 17th Street—parking.

Energy reaching into her bag—pulling out a gun.

Leaning handing the gun to Fire.

“I need you to get rid of this for me,” she says.

Nodding Fire.

“Listen,” says Green, looking up into the mirror, “we’re sorry about the body coming—”

“Don’t worry about it,” says Energy. “You two are doing a great job—just what we need.”

The two quiet.

Sitting staring out the windshield.

Energy leaning forward.

“I’m going away for a while,” she says, “at least until this thing quiets down.”

The two nodding.

Energy leaning back into the seat.

“So what I need you two to do, is—is to keep doing what you’re doing—but even more.

To recruit more members for your squad.”

The two nodding.

“It’s peaceful now,” says Energy, “but we all know that it won’t stay that way.

“The winter is ending, and temperatures are rising.

“War is coming.

“For us—I mean, for us, war is always here. We are always at war.

“So we have no choice, really. If we let down our guard, then they win.

“Our only choice is to keep the pressure on, to reassert our power.

“And the way to do that is to add more nodes.”

Energy leaning forward.

“We can’t just expect all of our nodes to be ready for battle at the drop of a pin, right?

We need to prepare, to have groups of nodes trained. To have reinforcements and weapons caches.”

The two nodding.

“So that’s your job now,” says Energy.

“Green, you will continue what you’re doing now.

"Fire, your job will be to recruit new nodes—*special activities* nodes. Recruit them, then train them. Then, when they're trained, you'll send them over to Green. And Green will send them out into the field."

The two nodding.

"This is the crucial period," says Energy.

"We are at the transition between ending the war and maintaining peace.

"We are rebuilding these communities.

"We are—we have the other divisions building up the front lines, but we need you back here in the rear, keeping the enemy at bay."

The two nodding.

Energy looking at the two each.

"You must always be ready for war.

"You must always already be at war.

"There is no peace—there is only war."

Sunday, March 6th

Cloudy, 52°

8:12 AM

Coming down Quarles.

Knocking.

The White man opening the door—nodding.

Entering Energy.

The Chinese man standing next to the Indian man.

8:23 AM

The four sitting drinking coffee, tea.

Energy looking over at the White man.

"Where are you from?" she asks.

The White man sipping tea green. "Oregon," he says, "Bend."

Nodding Energy turning to the Indian man.

"What about you?" she asks.

"San Francisco," he says.

Nodding sipping Energy—turning to the Chinese man.

"And you?" she asks.

"Los Angeles," he says.

"Born in Hong Kong," he says.

Nodding Energy.

"I was born in Korea," she says, "and I grew up around here. We moved when I was in elementary school."

The three others nodding sipping.

"My name's Kyin Choi," she says.

"Gary Cheung," says the man from Los Angeles.

"Doug Osborn," says the man from Bend.

"Vinny Singh," says the man from San Francisco.

Sipping Kyin.

"What's it like in Los Angeles?"

Smiling Gary. "It's—crazy," he says. "Crazy traffic—but I like it there."

"Is your family there?"

"No, no—my family's in Hong Kong."

"And what's it like there?"

"Hong Kong? Hong Kong is—the best. Hong Kong, you walk around and sweat and eat food. You are always sweating and walking eating food. Street food. It's a great place."

Smiling Kyin.

"We don't have that much street food around here," she says.

"Neither do we," says Vinny. "Maybe a few taco trucks here and there. Burritos."

"Oh—I bet they're good, though," says Kyin. "San Francisco burritos."

Vinny nodding smiling. "Yeah, they are," he says.

"We have good tacos in LA," says Gary. "Fish tacos."

"What about Bend?" asks Kyin. "What's that like?"

Sipping shrugging Doug. "Bend's a small city," he says. "Lakes and a mountains—old dead volcanoes."

"And you lived there all your life?"

Nodding sipping Doug. "Most of it, anyway. Traveled around a bit, ended up back over in Eugene."

"And that's where you met up with Darger?"

Nodding Doug. “Yep. One of my friends said I should come meet this group of people who were actually doing something instead of sitting around talking about it. So I went. Next thing I know, I’m telling them what I know about nuclear physics. Spent nuclear fuel rods. Then I meet up with Vinny here, and we’re on our way.”

Sipping Energy, turning to Vinny. “What about you—how’d you end up here?”

Grinning Vinny.

1:19 PM

Gary standing leaving the room.

Then returning with a suitcase.

Laying the suitcase open on the table.

Clicking open the lid.

Inside—a cylinder, a clock.

Gary pointing to a clock.

“This,” he says, “is the timer. You set it just like you would an alarm clock. Just set the time, and—the bomb is the alarm—like that.”

Nodding Kyin.

“Ok—good,” says Gary. “So—so you will—this is going into the trunk of the car—correct?”

Nodding Kyin.

“Ok—good. So—so you will have to place this on the side of the gas tank. Place it—you want to place it as close to the gas tank as possible. Ok—so, so the way—the power behind an EMP bomb is just like any other bomb. The explosion is the same. But this,” he says, touching the cylinder, “is what makes it electrical—a pulse. This is what will transform the ordinary bomb into an electrical wave—a tsunami.”

Gary smiling.

Grinning Kyin.

2:11 PM

Kyin sitting looking at Vinny and Doug.

“What time can you—what time will it begin? Loss of coolant—the aftereffects.”

Nodding Doug. “Right,” he says, “but that’s the thing—we can predict roughly when it—when things will begin, but—the thing is—”

“Loss of coolant,” says Vinny, “is inherently unpredictable. That’s why it’s good for us, but that’s also bad as far as a timetable.”

Nodding Kyin. "Ok, I got you."

Leaning back into the chair. "Alright," she says, "then what we'll do is—we'll set the time—I mean, can you give me a window? Two hours? Four hours? One hour?"

Nodding Doug. "Within ten minutes—a half hour—they'll know that something's up. And within an hour, they'll start to panic. Things will be in motion."

"An hour after loss of coolant," says Kyin.

"Correct," says Doug.

"And within three, four hours," says Vinny, "it will be a catastrophe. Something that they can't contain."

"Can't contain, as in—as in the media will be there?"

Nodding Vinny. "Can't contain as in Federal officials will be swarming down there and they'll be evacuating citizens from the peninsula."

"Ok," says Kyin.

"Right," she says.

Leaning forward.

"Let's say—ok, you leave here at 3:00 AM. Down to Calvert Cliffs. Climb through Calvert Cliffs Park. Plan on reaching the plant around 5:00 or 5:30. Then what? How long will it take for you to go in, do what you need, then get out?"

Nodding Doug. "Then I climb on the roof, while Vinny heads to the secondary power. It will take me at least an hour to get in—that's, say, 6:30 AM. No, that's too late. We time to get out of there."

Vinny leaning looking at Kyin. "The way we planned it," he says, "is we will leave here around 11:00 at night. That way we'll get in through the park, working through any problems that might come up. We'll go in and we'll be out by 5:00 AM. That means, somewhere around 8 and 9:30 is when it will begin being covered by the media."

Nodding Kyin. "Good—that's what I'm getting at. That means I'll see my alarm for—say 8:45 AM. Split the difference."

The two nodding.

3:56 PM

Standing holding the briefcase.

The three men rising.

"Say hello to Darger for me," she says.

The three nodding each.

Kyin holding out her fist.

The three holding out their fists against hers.

“Smash jargons,” she says.

“Smash jargons,” they say.

Monday, March 7th

Light rain, 44°

5:55 AM

Looking down on the street.

Cate coming out splashing holding an umbrella red. Tossing the brown bag into the trash.

Then walking stepping into a car—driving up to Connecticut.

Kyin pulling on a jacket, boots.

Down and out to the trash.

Slipping the bag underneath her coat.

6:03 AM

Mr. Dixon coming following a dog.

Stasy wagging licking Kyin’s palm.

“Good girl,” she says—rubbing behind the ears.

6:16 AM

Coming into the apartment.

Tossing the bag onto the coffee table.

Clicks on the news.

News, 6:18 AM

Weather: Looks like rain all today and all tomorrow. Things maybe clearing up on Wednesday. Over to Nina for traffic.

Traffic: Things looking pretty bad on 66 and the 14th Street bridge. Over on the inner loop, we’ve got stop-and-go traffic all the way back to Connecticut Avenue. That’s all for now.

Male anchor: Thanks, Nina. A sad story today as a young boy with cancer died yesterday. Little Hank Tillman lost his battle with brain cancer yesterday morning. Hank was an inspiration to the local community in Reston, Virginia. Sally has the story.

Into the kitchen.

Making coffee.

Cracking an egg
into a pan.

Rice from the rice
cooker.

Sliding the egg onto
rice.

News, 6:21 AM

Reporter: Little Hank Tillman was not one to give in. [cut to a woman sitting] My Hank was a shining star. He just lit up the room. [cut to a man sitting] Hank was an inspiration to all of us. He taught us that we can't give in, to fight, even when it

Gochujang, ketchup.

Carrying the plate, the mug to the couch.

Mutes—CCs—the screen.

7:25 AM

Coming up Columbia.

Into *The Grounds*. Ordering a flat white.

Across Euclid.

Malcolm X Park.

Benches, sidewalks—the long green lawn.

Branches budding blossoms.

Standing sipping.

Looking over the city.

10:18 AM

Into the building.

Checking mail. Into the elevator.

Down the hallway—keying into the apartment.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Carrying files to the coffee table. Sorting through pages.

11:52 AM

Lying draping her arm over her eyes.

Dozing.

Sleeping.

6:39 PM

Keys jangling—a door opening.

“What?”

Kyin sitting.

“Oh,” she says.

Standing walking to the bathroom. Urinating—washing her hands.

Splashing water against her face.

Towelings.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Slipping into jeans, socks, shoes, button-up, t-shirt, button-up, jacket.

Grabbing a bag, keys.

Exiting—out across the hallway.

Knocking.

Cate opening smiling.

Smiling Kyin. “Wanna hang out?” she asks.

Nodding Cate.

Turning walking into the kitchen.

Grabbing glasses two. A bottle of Malbec corked—uncorked.

Long legs liquid.

The two sitting sipping on the couch.

“I was hoping you’d come over tonight,” says Cate.

“Why’s that?”

Shrugging Cate. “Dunno. I’ve just been feeling out of it today. Maybe it’s the weather. I just feel sort of—I guess I don’t know what it is. A sort of empty gray feeling.”

Cate leaning against Kyin.

“I like that feeling,” says Kyin.

7:25 PM

Standing Kyin walking to the kitchen.

Digging through the drawer. Grabbing a stack of menus.

“Let’s order something,” she says.

Cate coming pouring wine

“Ok,” she says, “I need to eat something—my stomach feels weird.”

“Your stomach?”

Kyin touching Cate’s forehead.

“Aissh,” she says.

Then grabs Cate’s arm.

“Come here,” she says.

Leading Cate across the hall—into her apartment.

Laying Cate on the couch.

“Lie down,” says Kyin.

Then returns to Cate's apartment. Grabbing keys, bags—locking the door.

Back—covering Cate with a blanket.

To the kitchen for water cold.

Starting cooking rice.

Carrying a glass to Cate.

"You're sick," says Kyin.

Nodding sipping Cate. "Maybe a little," she says.

8:06 PM

Carrying a bowl to the coffee table.

Warm yuk.

Cate leaning eating the rice porridge.

10:12 PM

Cate sleeping moaning.

Sitting Kyin watching television.

Sitcoms and gameshows.

11:17 PM

Cate rolling over moaning.

Kyin standing stepping into a jacket. Putting on boots.

Grabbing keys, the briefcase.

Down and out to a sedan brown. Opening the trunk.

Opening the briefcase. Setting the time—8:46 AM.

Closing the briefcase—sliding it up against the gas tank.

Then closing the trunk.

Coming back up and into the apartment. Tossing the bag on the chair, the keys on the coffee table.

Standing looking over sleeping Cate.

Then leaning touching her forehead—brushing aside the hair wet.

Carrying the computer to the couch.

Clicking open chat.

ThunkChat, 11:28 PM

Vatbrain83: No, that's not what I meant.

Beingbecoming: What did you mean?

Swampman: BB! Good to see you!

Vatbrain83: Wow, BB. Been a while.

Beingbecoming: hey ya'll. Thought I'd stop by for a quick chat.

Vatbrain83: how's your real-world adventure going? Did you find yourself missing the ethereal plain?

Beingbecoming: no, I don't miss it at all. What are you two discussing?

Swampman: We know each other too well, bb. So we just rehash the same old topics. We were actually just arguing about the best way to grill a steak. Not very philosophical, I guess.

Vatbrain83: yes, when it's just old Swampy and me, we run out of ideas. That's why we need you around, bb. Get us talking about the meaning of life.

Beingbecoming: well, then, what is the meaning of life?

Vatbrain83: hoo boy. I stepped into that one, didn't I?

Swampman: life is what you make of it, bb. The "meaning" is whatever you want it to be. We are all self-made. To be is to be self-valued variable.

Vatbrain83: Couldn't disagree more. Who we are is determined by others. Culture, history, environment, evolution, DNA, etc. Add it all up. To be is to be categorized.

Beingbecoming: Jargonized. But we can still smash jargons. We can smash those categories and labels.

Vatbrain83: I'm not so sure. Sure, we can break through some categories—but not all of them. When we say, "What is the meaning of life?" the next question is "Who determines what the meaning of 'meaning' is"? I would argue that "meaning" is determined by our culture and environment. We can't figure out the meaning on our own. We can't even ask the question until we are taught how to ask.

Swampman: No, I disagree. Of course we can determine the meaning on our own. We may need others as a starting point, something to bounce ideas off of—but we are the ultimate arbiter. We decide.

ThunkChat, 11:53 PM

Beingbecoming: Hmm. Yes, I think so too, Swampy. We have the last word. Others may give us the ideas, but we are the ones living our own unique existence. We are the ones actualizing those ideas, making them into actions. There is only one me, and though my life may be similar others, to be similar is not to be the same. No one has lived my life in the way in which I have lived it. No one ever can. We each develop our own jargons.

Vatbrain84: Life is routine. We follow orders, we pay bills and taxes. We come home and do it again. Lather, rinse, repeat. The days, the weeks, the months, the years. We forget what day it is, what year it is. “Why am I alive?” we think. “What is the point?”

Swampman: We eat a fat cheeseburger, a ripe tomato. We visit our grandkids, see the smile on their faces. Buy them an ice cream cone, “Hurry! Lick it quick before it runs down your hand!” We sit on the water and watch the waves go by. We sweat in the summer sun, feeling the thick juice of life. Life is rebirth. We see variety in repetition. We learn new things, we grow, we change. We remember our daughter standing on a hill in the spring, throwing a frisbee to our dog—turning looking at us with those big bright eyes, a smile on her face. Life is love and joy, pure. Life is getting splinters, picking the wax out of your ears, getting sunburnt.

Vatbrain83: Life is famine and earthquakes, children starving dying from dictators. Your wife volunteers nights at a soupkitchen, but she still ends up getting stomach cancer and dying. Your son never calls or writes, because he won’t forgive you for something you forget you did twenty years ago. A teenage girl is running playing in the street and is run over by a man talking on a cellphone, or drunk. Or the man can’t afford new brakes because he’s poor, he’s working two jobs to support his family, but it’s just not enough. Life is genetic warfare. Genes battling it out. Life is poppies and heroin.

Beingbecoming: Life is—what is life? Metaphors and jargons. Life only has meaning when we care about others. We can choose to sit and watch others die, or we can do something about it. Sometimes doing something simply means choosing not to watch the suffering of others. Other times, it means lending a hand. Complicity comes in many forms. There will always be those that want to restrict freedom, to restrict peace. Those people should not exist—as well as any people that either help or enable their efforts. Humans are never gods; they are never perfect, and we should never revere them as such.

ThunkChat, 12:19 AM

Beingbecoming: Life is more questions than answers. In a way, living is learning how to ask the right questions. If I ask, “Why do we exist?” there will be no answer.

Children ask lists of questions, until we teach them the questions that we want them to ask. We funnel the flow. We jargonize. We often do not know that there is an answer until we are able to correctly formulate the question. “Why does night exist?” does not make sense until we can ask, “Why does the Earth rotate?” Some things, we stare at them and we ask the same question, over and over, because we feel that there must be answer to their puzzle. But it is often a puzzle of our own creation. We cannot see that it is that question itself that is shaping our worldview, restricting our thought. A child is shot and killed—why? A compelling question—yet the wrong question to ask. We must ask instead, “Why did they build that Freeway?” “Why did they build those housing projects in that part of town?” “Why did they take so long to bring the metro to this part of town?” “Why did de-industrialization take place?” “Why does de facto segregation remain?” “Why did the crack war happen?” Life is a zero-sum game.

Whatever we are doing, we are implicitly not doing something else. We, each of us, either implicitly or explicitly, set up a hierarchy, a ranking of things that are important to us. So, when we choose to do something, we are simultaneously choosing not to do something else, something different. Genes make choices. Individuals make choices. Groups makes choices. Governments make choices. Every moment of every day contains either an implicit or explicit choice. A choice to do something. A choice not to do something else. The world of ideas sits idly by, watching those opportunities for choice float by, letting the decisions be made by others, for others. The solution, then, is action—will—choice. Life is about choosing. More often than not, life is about choosing the lesser of two evils. To stop the flow and create our own branch, our own river of choice, pushing forward through time. What can a single individual accomplish? Action. For me, for now at least, that is something, it is a way step forward, it is enough.

Closing the computer.

Laying on the couch.

Dozing—sleeping.

Tuesday, March 8th

Showers, 50°

5:25 AM

Coughing Cate.

“Huh?”

Kyin sitting—looking over at Cate.

“Oh,” says Kyin.

Standing walking to the kitchen for water cold.

Carrying a glass to Cate. Shaking her shoulder.

“Here,” says Kyin, “drink this.”

Cate sitting drinking nodding.

“Thanks,” she says—sipping.

Asking, “What time is it?”

Kyin checking her phone. “5:27,” she says.

Nodding Cate handing the glass to Kyin.

Then sitting sliding down the bed.

“I gotta get dressed,” she says.

Kyin watching Cate move off the bed.

“Are you sure?”

Cate grabbing her bag.

“I gotta go in today,” she says. “Shoot—did you bring my keys over?”

Kyin turning looking around the room.

Seeing the keys on the coffee table—grabbing handing them to Cate.

“Thanks,” says Cate.

“I gotta go,” she says, “thanks, Kyin.”

Nodding Kyin watching Cate leave the apartment.

The sound of keys jangling—a door opening, closing.

Kyin moving the chair against the window—sitting.

Looking out on the rain-soaked street.

5:54 AM

A door opening—keys jangling. The door slamming shut.

Cate coming out into the rain—pulling her jacket up over her head.

Dropping the brown bag into the trash.

Then walking stepping into brown sedan. Driving up to Connecticut.

Kyin standing throwing on a jacket, boots.

Down and out, crossing the street. Sliding the brown bag under her jacket.

6:06 AM

Mr. Dixon coming following Stasy.

Stasy wet wagging licking Kyin's palm and fingers.

"Good dog," says Kyin—rubbing behind the ears.

Mr. Dixon lighting cigarettes, two. Handing a stick to Kyin.

The rain coming pouring.

The two standing smiling.

6:18 AM

Coming into the apartment.

Tossing the brown bag onto the coffee table.

Clicking on the news.

News, 6:19 AM

Female anchor: News today of a tragic explosion in a coal mine. Authorities are not sure yet how many have died, but it looks to be over twenty.

Male anchor: That's a tragedy. Also in the news, a deadly terrorist blast outside of Ghurian near the Iranian border in Afghanistan. The Iranian President denounced the attack.

Female anchor: In Alaska, a deadly school shooting. A young girl entered the school and started firing, killing three others before being apprehended by authorities. Friends say that the girl was constantly bullied for being overweight.

Male anchor: FBI agents yesterday apprehended a group of men in Los Angeles planning on bombing Disneyland.

Female anchor: That's scary. Coming up, your local 5-day forecast. Also, have you ever wondered who cleans our city streets at night? Carl has the story.

To the kitchen
making coffee.

Toast into the
toaster.

Cracking an egg
into a pan.

Kimchi from the
refrigerator.

Coffee mugged.

Sliding the egg onto
toast, kimchi on the
plate.

Carrying the plate, the mug to the couch.

Mutes—CCs—the screen.

7:01 AM

Standing dressing packing.

Down and out to the street.

7:17 AM

Coming down Connecticut—crossing Florida.

Entering *The Grounds*.

Placing a call.

Ordering a triple flat white.

Moving off to the side—looking out
onto R Street.

Cabs and cars fast moving through
weaving bodies walking.

The order called—she turns and
grabs the cup, says, “Thanks.”

Cell, 7:20 AM

Chin Hae Choi: Hello?

Kyin: Hi, Mom. How are you?

CHC: Oh, Kyin. Is something wrong? Are
you ok?

Kyin: I’m fine. Just wanted to call and say hi,
see how you’re doing.

CHC: Oh, ok.

Kyin: What are you doing today?

CHC: Oh, just working. The usual. I am
done at lunch, if you want to meet up?

Kyin: Maybe. I’ll call you later.

CHC: Oh, ok. Call me later. Bye.

Kyin: Bye, Mom.

Then slides through the crowd, pushing out into the rain.

Down into and through the circle.

Coming to the metro.

Down, down.

Doors opening, step back to allow customers to exit.

When boarding, please move to the center of the car.

Entering the train, sliding into a seat.

Doors closing, step back to allow the doors to close.

Sitting slow-sipping.

Through tunnels dark, looking over the people standing leaning seated.

Skirts and suits, shoes shiny and scuffed.

Sneakers and umbrellas, backpacks and purses.

Kyin resting her head against the glass.

Watching the tunnel, the fluorescent lights flashing passing.

The reflection of commuters sitting reading magazines and novels.

Flipping pages of newspapers. Holding sections folded against books, resting atop knees crossed.

Bodies standing swaying.

The images fading as the train emerges, rising out into the light.

